

THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE:
REDEEMING CRISIS AND TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE

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To My wife, Lisa who is the greatest life-partner God could ever have given to me

and

To my three incredible daughters, Aubrie, Taylor, and Sydney who inspire me daily.

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VITA

GLOSSARY

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Competency: Based on skill sets. Harv Powers, Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development. May 2011

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Example (Tupos) A figure, a copy, image; a pattern, model; a type, prefiguring something or somebody. It is a precedent to be followed and imitated. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance 5179, <http://biblehub.com/Greek/5179>

Influence: When one life touches another in a family, community, organization or culture. Bill Thrall, Redemptive Leadership handout

Leadership: Influencing others to release their redemptive potential in fulfilling their purpose under God. Harv Powers, Redemptive Leadership, (2001), 6

Humility: Low, humble, from humus earth. Miriam-Webster's Dictionary, "humility" www.merriam-webster.com accessed May 8, 2015

Meta-narrative: The Christian gospel...tells how for the world's redemption God entered into history, the eternal came into time, the kingdom of heaven invaded the realm of earth, in the great events of the incarnation, crucifixion, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are they reliable?* 8th edition (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing & InterVarsity Press 1981), 2

Principle: The underlying truths, which transcend situations. Dr. Harv Powers, May 2011

Redemption: Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV)

Reframing: To look at, present, or think of in a new or different way. Collins Dictionary, "Reframe" <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/English/reframe> accessed May 10, 2015

Self-Care: Rest of the soul. Matthew 11:29 Repositioning and alignment of life whereby "being" is prioritized over "doing".

Self-Story: Composed of those events, relationships and reactions that make the cut into conscious memory. We link these memories together to create a coherent narrative. Christine Baldwin, *Storycatcher: Making sense of Our Lives through the Power and Practice of Story* (New World Library 2005), p 124

Servant: (dikonos) A waiter, servant; one who performs any service, administrator. It is one who executes the demands of another, especially a master. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, 1249, <http://biblehub.com/greek/1249.htm>.

Slave: (doulos) Someone who belongs to another; bond-slave, without any ownership rights of their own. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, 1401, <http://biblehub.com/greek/1401.htm>

Spirit-led: Guided by the Holy Spirit; Divine guidance; According to the Spirit and not the flesh. Romans 8:1-17 NIV

Story: A detailed, character-based narration of a character's struggle to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal. Kendall Haven, *Story Proof*. (Libraries Unlimited: The Greenwood Publishing Group 2007), p 3-4

Success The degree to which one moves forward and upward, progressing in one's lifelong mission, despite all obstacles or other forms of adversity. Dr. Paul G. Stoltz, *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc 1997) p 5

The Wall: Our will meeting God's will face to face. Janet Hagberg, Robert A. Guelich, *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith* (Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ 1989), p 114

Transformed (Metamorphoo) To change the external form, transfigure; mid. To change one's form, be transfigured. Online search for Greek word origin, transformed <https://teknia.com / Greek dictionary/metamorphoo> accessed May 8, 2015

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND THE SETTING

Leaders face a unique challenge when it comes to living life in balance and ultimately leaving a legacy of honor. According to an in-depth study by Dr. J. Robert Clinton, professor of Leadership at the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, only one in three leaders end well.¹ Stories of leaders who fall at the apex of their career are as ancient as the Scriptures and as modern as today's headlines.

In their book, *The Ascent Of A Leader*, Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol and Ken McElrath state, "Leadership is a challenging and unpredictable climb. The pressure of success, the temptations of privilege, the demands of followers, and the isolations of leadership make the ladder shaky at the top."² Leaders come to the Washington, D.C., area with motives as noble as changing individual lives and society for the better and as ignoble as seizing power for personal gain. The perennial debate over whether the private lives and conduct of leaders should be considered when assessing a leader's public career is indicative of the struggle to find an accurate means to measure our leaders. Those in the limelight often shy away from embracing the title of "role model," because it seems an impossible standard by which to live.

1 J. Robert Clinton, "Finishing well – Six characteristics" in Clinton Biblical Leadership Commentary, Volume 1. (Fuller Theological Seminary, 1999) 370 pp. <http://bobbyclinton.com>

2 Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol and Ken McElrath, *The Ascent of a Leader*. How ordinary relationships develop extraordinary character and influence. (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), 17.

At the core of leadership is influence. Influence can be used for honorable or dishonorable ends. The apostle Paul used his influence to point others toward Christ as seen in his admonition, “Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.”³ Our lives are always pointing people in one direction or another.

It is not always the moral or ethical issues that derail leaders. Dr. Will Miller, author of *Refrigerator Rights* states, “Many of us still cling to the illusion that we can pursue our careers with abandon and still hang on to family closeness.”⁴ A relentless focus on career and long work hours make leaders susceptible not only to affairs and the dissolution of marriage but burnout resulting in diminished influence.

If a leader is to maximize their influence for good, he or she must find a correlation between career and nurturing the inner-life. Finding meaning in one’s unique life story and purpose beyond the fulfillment of the American dream is essential. Leaders seek an answer to the age-old question, “Is this all there is to life?”

In the Washington, D.C. area, personal crisis is often spoken of in terms of avoidance or containment. The reality is that many leaders carry negative baggage from their past that has the potential of sabotaging their present and future. This baggage is often in the form of hurts. Roland S. Barth, founder of the Harvard University’s The Principals’ Center states, “All leaders incur wounds.”⁵ Dr. Harvey Powers points to a

³ 1 Corinthians 11:1 (NIV)

⁴ Will Miller, *Refrigerator Rights: Creating Connections and Restoring Relationships*. (The Berkley Publishing Group, November 2002), 59.

⁵ Roland S. Barth, “All leaders incur wounds.” Back cover quote in Richard H. Ackerman & Pat Maslin-Ostrowski, *The Wounded Leader: How Real Leadership Emerges in Times of Crisis* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2002).

hopeful, redemptive end when he states that it is possible to “go from seeing events in our stories as limiting factors to seeing these events as why God uses us.”⁶

Several questions will be addressed:

1. Is there a biblical basis for connecting God’s meta-narrative to individual narratives?
2. What is the definition of crisis and how can such moments be transformative?
3. What do we learn from the Bible as to reframing?
4. What are the unique challenges that leaders face?
5. What are the definitions of leadership and influence?
6. How does one define Redemptive Purpose and is the Redemptive Model applicable to modern leaders in the context of Washington, D.C.?
7. What does a curriculum that draws forth a greater understanding of God being at work in the narrative of these leaders look like?

On September 1, 2001 I moved my family to the Washington, D.C. area. Ten days later, America suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history. As the Pentagon was on fire, my wife and I headed to the steps of the U.S. Capitol where members of Congress gathered. As we listened to them singing “God Bless America”, we turned to see a building that had space for lease just behind the Capitol. On September 12, 2001 we leased a large office and launched a Prayer Center (the precursor of Capital Life Church where I presently serve as Lead Pastor).

⁶ Dr. Harvey Powers, “Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development,” Classroom lecture notes from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC 2013

Our first friends upon arriving in the Nation's Capital served in the administration of President George W. Bush. We felt led to walk closely with them, strengthening them as they served the President and sought to maintain a healthy marriage and family. From their stories and the stories of other leaders, we became aware of the unique challenges that leaders face. In President Bush's first term, my wife and I were asked to lead Bible studies at the White House. These weekly studies branched out to agencies including the departments of Justice, Defense, and Homeland Security. They took place over a seven-year period. During this time, we witnessed a spiritual hunger and desire for deeper meaning in their lives.

As we led the Bible studies, we gained greater trust with the leaders. Soon we began to hear individual stories, not only shared by government leaders but members of the military and media. With any depth of sharing would be the revelation of crises and wounds both past and present. As one pastor said when I interviewed him for Project II of my doctoral requirements, "We all have a hurt trail." It is the "hurt trail" that so often opens the door to ministry with leaders.

Having experienced a difficult departure from the University where I served faithfully for 15 years, I landed in the 2011 Redemptive Leadership cohort at just the right time. I had moved from the hurts of leaving the University where I was a Dean and Chaplain but had never processed those hurts in such a way as to find redemptive meaning. It was during this first week of the cohort that Dr. Rodney Cooper led the US through the telling of our stories focusing on the high and low points. He encouraged us to consider what God was teaching us. This process caused me to articulate the depth of

my story and to see it within the context of God's larger narrative. For me, it left a profound impact and I knew it was a means to touch the lives of others.

When I consider the fact that Capital Life Church was launched out of a personal crisis (My departure from Oral Roberts University) and a national crisis (the events of 9-11), I am fascinated to delve deeper into how God uses crisis to bring about influence. I will use the Redemptive Model that I learned in my first residency. It will serve as a basis to teach leaders in the Washington DC area who attend Capital Life church to be effective in their ministry to other leaders.

Key Research Question

Will a curriculum for leaders from the D.C. area who attend Capital Life Church, based on the Redemptive Model, train them as to how crisis within each life narrative can be redeemed by God to be a catalyst for greater influence?

Hypotheses

Leaders trained in a curriculum based on the Redemptive Model will reframe personal life crisis as a catalyst for a greater redemptive influence.

A pre-assessment and a post-assessment will measure this hypothesis. A pre and post assessment will measure this hypothesis. Participants will be D.C. area leaders attending Capital Life Church. The ultimate post study outcome will be to take what they learn and influence other influencers with the same.

Theological Framework

A biblical foundation establishing that God uses the crises points of an individual's life narrative to increase influence will be examined. Beginning in the book of Genesis and utilizing both Old and New Testaments, the rich use of narratives and

story will be explored. Biographical accounts will focus on Moses, Joseph, David, Paul and Jesus. Crisis will be considered in the context of life story and viewed in terms of God's power to redeem.

The biblical, biographical study will prepare the leaders at Capital Life Church to consider their own stories and to see God's role in bringing them to a place of greater influence. Participants will be taught to attune and interpret the unique story God is writing through the crisis moments of their lives. A special emphasis will be placed on God's meta-narrative and how such a vital role within each individual narrative.

Literature Review

The literature review will focus on the value of storytelling and the meaning found in each individual narrative. Unique challenges faced by leaders will be researched. Tied to this concept is the idea of finding meaning in difficulties. The final emphasis will be on utilizing influence found within the uniqueness of one's story with a special emphasis on redeeming crises.

Insights from leaders who met with the Redemptive Leadership Cohort will be interwoven in this section. Lessons learned from the local seasoned ministry leaders that I interviewed will be noted. The instruction and power points of Dr. Harvey Powers and Dr. Rodney Cooper will be given particular attention.

Methodology

My research method will be a leadership summit composed of a minimum of 10 D.C. area leaders who attend Capital Life Church. The goal will be to present a leadership curriculum based on the Redemptive Leadership Model. The curriculum will

present the biblical basis for story and share biographies found in Scripture that illustrate how God redeems crisis.

We will review the dark side of leadership noting the need for proper balance. We will study aspects of self-care so as to avoid burn-out. We will look at reframing. A before and after assessment will be used to gauge the level at which the selected leaders understand their life narrative, how it attaches to God's larger story and how crisis can be redeemed translating into effective influence.

Outcomes

It is my hope that the leaders who participate in this leadership summit will recognize that their individual stories are tied to God's larger story. I desire for them to find value in the uniqueness of their stories and to help others see the same. I hope the leaders participating will learn to reframe their life crises in light of God's redemptive grace and recognize the potential in each crisis to bring forth redemptive influence. I hope they will value and use the tools presented to live life within biblical principles and thereby finish strong.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK

Purpose

All leaders face challenges. Expectations, balancing priorities, keeping one's health, and setting the framework for a meaningful legacy are but a few. In a world of constantly clashing values, the definitions of virtue and truth seem to be constantly shifting. Leaders need a reputable, time-honored source to reference as a guidebook for navigating the times in which we live. With this in mind and recognizing that the leaders participating are all from Capital Life Church, the Bible will be used as the primary source as a redemptive leadership model for leaders is considered.

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the Biblical foundation for Story with a particular focus on how God redeems crises in individuals' lives to bring about greater influence. A scriptural perspective on leadership will help to set the foundation for a study that is geared toward leaders. Personal biblical narratives will be considered in light of God's larger meta-narrative. Biblical leaders from the Old and New Testament will be set forth as examples of how God redeemed crisis points in their stories to bring forth influence.

Biblical Leadership

First Timothy 3:1 state "To aspire to leadership is an honorable ambition" (NEB). The search for the perfect definition of leadership seems elusive. Google cites 479,000,000 references to leadership proving that the subject is of interest to people on a

large scale.⁷ The biblical admonition to “aspire to leadership” challenges the idea that people are “born” leaders. Some define leaders in terms of physical features, intelligence, or pedigree. When the prophet Samuel came to the house of Jesse to anoint Israel’s next king, he believed Eliab to be God’s choice, but God said, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7 NIV). The Bible intimates that true leadership is not based primarily on traits but on the heart. Aspiring to leadership must begin within the heart.

The old idea that leadership is domination has in recent years evolved to leadership being considered in terms of influence. John Maxwell, a current best-selling author on leadership states, “Leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less.”⁸ Dr. Paul Hersey, Founder of the Center for Leadership Studies, defines leadership as, “Any attempt to influence.”⁹ Dr. Harvey Powers moves beyond defining leadership in terms of mere influence and forms an outstanding definition for godly leadership when he states, “Leadership is influencing others to release their redemptive potential in fulfilling their purpose under God.”¹⁰

Jesus challenged his followers to embrace a view of influence that is not found in domination but in serving. In Mark 10:42-44 the Bible states,

⁷ Google online search for the word leadership accessed May 8, 2015.

⁸ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 2007), 13.

⁹ Sam Shriver, *Leadership is Influence and Influence is all around us*, accessed April 22, 2015 at <https://www.trainingindustry.com/blog/leadership/leadership-is-influence-and-influence-is-all-around-us/>

¹⁰ Harvey Powers, *Redemptive Leadership*, (2011), 6.

42 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **43** Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, -and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all” (NIV).

The idea of human greatness is associated with high placement in society and human honors, but Jesus reset the paradigm. He called his followers to be slaves. There are two clearly contrary value sets; (1) serve oneself (2) serve God and others foremost. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus states, “No one can serve two masters.” (NIV) The word servant in the New Testament is the Greek word, diakonos. It means “A waiter, servant; one who performs any service, an administrator. It is one who executes the demands of another, especially of a master.”¹¹ The word slave in the New Testament is the Greek word, doulos, which means someone who belongs to another; bond-slave, without any ownership rights of their own. The term is used with the highest dignity in the New Testament – namely of believers who willingly live under Christ’s authority as his devoted followers.¹²

While this review will address key biblical figures in further detail later on, a cursory look now is appropriate. The first and most important biblical figure is the Lord. Jesus is our example, having reframed servanthood. In Philippians 2:5-8 the Bible states,

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather he made himself nothing by taking the nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a

¹¹ Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, 1249, <http://biblehub.com/greek/1249.htm>

¹² Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, 1401, <http://biblehub.com/greek/1401.htm>

man, he humbles himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! (NIV).

Jesus took on the nature of a servant. He fully submitted to the will and leading of his Father, God. In John 5:19 Jesus stated, “...Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing because whatever the Father does the son also does.” For Jesus, doing came from being in the presence of his heavenly Father. Jesus influences us by his example to fully submit to God’s leading and he calls us to be an example to others. Even as Jesus is our example, we are called to be examples to others in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4:12b NIV).

Servanthood is a heart issue. It challenges our need for status, significance, and control. It reframes us from pride to a place of humility where we represent not ourselves but the Master, Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 5:1-2 the Bible states, “Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” The scripture is found in context with Ephesians 4:2 which is a call by the Apostle Paul for unity and maturity. He states that believers are to, “be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” Paul’s letter to the church at Ephesus is a call to following God’s example in how we treat one another and to build up others. It focuses us on meeting the needs of others in his name as acts of unselfish service. In this we find influence in the lives of others.

Paul the Apostle is another example. He spoke to the young leader Timothy and challenged him to “set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith

and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12 NIV). A true leader sets an example for others. The Greek word in the scriptures for the English word ‘example’ is tupos meaning “(a) a figure, a copy, image (b) a pattern, model, (c) a type, prefiguring something or somebody. It is a precedent to be followed and imitated.”¹³

At the center of leadership is influence. At the center of godly leadership is being influenced by the influencer, Jesus Christ. Why does this paper not consider character or spirituality as the core or center of leadership? The antagonist of the early church, Saul was a leader before his conversion and afterward when he was known as Paul. He would have been considered to be a person of good character and spirituality both before and after. The difference in leadership was what type of influence he wielded. A reframing on the road to Damascus changed not only Saul but those he would later impact as the Apostle Paul. It is the reframing that changed the influence Paul exercised. While Paul’s ability to influence was present both before and after his conversion, the result of that core was influenced by his encounter with God’s larger narrative.

J. Robert Clinton states this in terms of godly leadership when he writes, “The central task of leadership is influencing God’s people toward God’s purposes.”¹⁴ A key example of this influence is again found in Jesus’ example. In John 13:1-17 we read that he washes the feet of the disciples. This event occurs just prior to Jesus’ death and resurrection. Of all the lessons Jesus could teach at this critical time before his departure, he chooses to teach servanthood and not in words but in actions. These are the leaders who will launch the early church. Jesus’ focus is not on leaders being dominant, not who

¹³ Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance 5179, <http://biblehub.com/greek/5179>

¹⁴ J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NavPress 1988), 203.

will sit in positions of political power as was the mindset of some but on leaders serving. God kneels to wash feet.

As seen in these biblical examples, especially in Jesus' foot washing, leadership is influence and that is exemplified in modeling. Titus 2:7a states "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works." (ESV). The concept of public figures as "role models" is all but lost in present day society. People desire notoriety without accountability. Each time a significant moral or ethical failure is revealed on the part of a well-known public personality, it seems public sentiment is split as to whether one's private behavior has any bearing upon one's public career. Dr. Leighton Ford writes with great clarity when he states, "Leadership is first of all not something one does but something one is."¹⁵ It is in this concept of "being" that one models for others what true leadership should embody.

Leadership Challenges

Solomon describes how one can be at the height of his influence and at the same time court dangerous undertones that threaten one's life's work and influence. His words traverse across the centuries: "I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me. I denied myself nothing my eyes desired, I refused my heart no pleasure" (Ecclesiastes 2:9-10, NIV). Leaders face unique challenges and Scripture reminds us, "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2, NIV). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary states that the

¹⁵ Dr. Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 1991), 38.

word humility is from the Latin word, *humilis* meaning low, humble, from *humus* earth; akin to Greek *chthon* earth, *Chamai* on the ground.¹⁶ Remaining humble in the face of power and persuasion is a challenge many leaders face, some successfully, others not.

Balancing careers, families, and responsibilities is another challenge. Leaders in the Bible are often viewed as loners, only seen within the context of their ministry. The modern reader does not consider them in terms of their families or of their secular vocations. They are simply viewed as to their roles as prophets, disciples and the like. In reality, Bible leaders had busy schedules. Abel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were shepherds. Joseph, Moses, David and Solomon were government leaders. Peter and John were fishermen. Luke was a physician. Paul was a tent maker. Jesus was a carpenter.

They were relied upon as they juggled a multiplicity of responsibilities. Many Bible leaders knew what it was to experience family challenges. Adam, Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, and David all had dysfunctional families (Genesis 3, 4:8, 16, 19, 25, 27 and 2 Samuel 11-18). The balance between career and family is often delicate. The influence of a leader can easily be curtailed when his home life is out of balance.

Paul the Apostle knew what it was to juggle numerous concerns and yet he ran the race in such a way as to win (1 Corinthians 9:24b). He had what he referred to as a “thorn in the side” (2 Corinthians 12:7) that has led to great conjecture as to whether such was spiritual, emotional, or physical in nature and constant opposition from both within and beyond the faith community. Yet he persevered with excellence. With confidence he stated, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1,

¹⁶ Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, “humility” www.merriam-webster.com accessed May 8, 2015.

NIV). Paul was a leader who influenced others to follow God and be effective for his kingdom. Paul's life story was integrally involved in God's larger story and the results changed not only Paul's history but also the history of mankind.

Story in the Bible

In Genesis 1:1 are the words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (NIV). With these words the reader is introduced to the greatest story ever told. The Bible is an interlinking of smaller stories that combine to tell God's larger story. The Bible scholar F.F. Bruce notes that tie between God's story and the story of humankind, "...the Christian gospel...tells how for the world's redemption God entered into history, the eternal came into time, the kingdom of heaven invaded the realm of earth, in the great events of the incarnation, crucifixion, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ."¹⁷ This meta-narrative, God's story is the most vital story for humanity.

The Old Testament constitutes about three-fourths of the Bible. It is estimated that approximately forty percent of the Old Testament is narrative.¹⁸ Stories of God's goodness and acts in history were handed down generation-by-generation. Joel 1:1-3 states, "The Word of the Lord that came to Joel son of Pethuel. Hear this, you elders; listen, all who live in the land. Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors? Tell it to your children and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation" (NIV). The Exodus story of the

¹⁷ F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are they Reliable?* (8th edition) (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans Publishing & InterVarsity Press 1981), 2.

¹⁸ Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (2nd edition) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1993), 78.

Hebrew slaves coming out of Egypt is an example of the handing down of stories of God's faithfulness and interaction with humans. In Exodus 13:14, the Bible states, "In days to come, when your sons asks you, 'what does this mean?' say to him, 'with a mighty hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery'" (NIV).

The importance of the handing down of story cannot be underestimated. The story of Moses and the Exodus was threatened before it began when there was a break in the link of God's story being known and respected by a king. In Exodus 1:8, the Bible says, "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (KJV). The story and reputation of Joseph and how God used him to save a generation amidst famine was either forgotten or disregarded. The result, generations later, is that a king shows no fear of God and mandates the death of all Hebrew male children. The reason given in Scripture is that the king "knew not Joseph." The difference between life and death can be found in the power of story. God's story, although challenged by counter stories, must never be stopped, or made of no affect.

In the New Testament are many uses of narratives. Acts is written in narrative form. In the Gospels, Jesus often used parables that were simple stories with spiritual meaning. They related to everyday life. To farmers Jesus spoke about farming and to fishermen, he spoke about fish. Jesus knew that stories clarified truths and were memorable:

In How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth, authors Fee and Stuart state, Biblical narratives tell us about things that happened – but not just any things: Their purpose is to show God at work in his creation and among his people. The narratives glorify him, help us to understand and appreciate him, and give us a

picture of his providence and protection. At the same time, they also provide illustrations of many other lessons important to our lives.”¹⁹

Beyond the mere recording of historical facts, the Scriptures introduce people that give particular meaning to us today. Their lives show us that God is active in the affairs of humans. Their narratives tell us that God is at work in and through humans in order to bring forth his purposes.

God is the author of each of our stories. In the New Testament Paul states, “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10, NIV). The Greek word for workmanship is *poiema* from which we get the English word poem.²⁰ We are the poem that God is writing with a pre-determined, intentional plan in mind. Philippians 1:6b tells us, “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (NIV). Romans 8:28 states, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (NIV). That God is at work in the lives of those who love him is a central theme of Scripture.

Paul focuses on the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in 2 Corinthians 3:18. “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (NIV). The word transformed comes from the Greek word *metamorphoo* from which we get the English word metamorphosis. It means, “To change the external form, transfigure; mid. To change one’s form, be transfigured. Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2;

¹⁹ Fee and Stuart, 79.

²⁰ Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, 4161, <http://biblehub.com/greek/4161.htm>

to undergo a spiritual transformation Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18.”²¹ Every person has stories; the key is to find out how God is uniquely working in each person’s life to transform them into the image of Jesus.

Crisis in One’s Story

That God is interactive in the lives of those who love him is clearly stated in Scripture. That God is, in particular, at work in the midst of our weaknesses is recorded by Paul as he writes to the church at Corinth and candidly relates his personal testimony in 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10. (NIV):

But he said to me, ‘my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul delighted in his difficulties because he found God’s strength was made evident at the crisis points of his life. The word crisis in Greek is *krisis*, which means to sift or separate.²² The Chinese symbol for crisis is the merging of two signs “danger” and “opportunity” having the potential to transform or destroy.²³ Clearly, Paul saw how his life crises (danger) transformed him into the man he became (opportunity), and used these changes to lead others to Christ. The Bible has these examples throughout.

²¹ Online search for Greek word origin metamorphosis, transformed
<https://www.teknia.com/greek-dictionary/metamorphoo> accessed May 8, 2015.

²² Dan B. Allender, *Leading with a limp: Turning your struggles into strengths* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press 2006), 64.

²³ Allender, 67.

God's Meta-Narrative

As God's meta-narrative is explored, it is evident that the men studied so far have recognized their own redemption for leadership. The Apostle Paul did not hide his weaknesses but rather fully embraced them. In 1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV) Paul states, "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst" . He relates Jesus' story to his own. What could be considered a supreme insult is to Paul, his greatest boast. Paul's lowest point was the place where Jesus encountered him which became the launching point of Paul's greatest influence. It is the place where he was redeemed.

In the Old Testament, Joseph is brutally mistreated by his own brothers. Sold into slavery by the family he trusted, he endures false accusations and imprisonment. After interpreting Pharaoh's dream, he is elevated to second in command over all of Egypt and saves the nation from famine. When he is reunited with the brothers who betrayed him, he expresses words that give us a glimpse into how he interpreted God's meta-narrative amidst the crisis points in his life. Joseph addresses his brothers in Genesis 50:20, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Joseph reframes what could otherwise have made him bitter and vengeful. Joseph recognizes the place where he was redeemed.

This writer believes there are likely many other leaders in the Old and New Testaments who experienced crises that were reframed by God's purpose and who responded by using their influence to redemptively impact the lives of others. Although these Bible leaders are not the only ones in Scripture to meet these criteria, all were

greatly instrumental at critical moments in God's unfolding story and deserve specific mention. Each overcame crises in their lives to trace the culminating exercise of redemptive influence. They all have in common the fact that they are known enough by scriptural narrative for one to gain genuine insight that is applicable today.

Moses

The story of Moses is an excellent example of how God used each aspect of his life-story, bringing him to a level of great influence. Henry Blackaby states, "When God gets ready for you to take a new step or direction in his activity, it will always be in sequence with what he has already been doing."²⁴ What God is doing permeates both the highs and lows of one's life. Philippians 3:16 speaks of living up to what one has already attained. Not only should one look for God to interact with their present and future but also with their past. Such is the case of Moses.

Moses' life narrative shows that God uses people because of and not in spite of their stories. Moses' life was in jeopardy from the beginning. An edict went out from a king who was unaware of Joseph and all that Joseph represented in God's redemptive story for Egypt and the world. The failure to pass down the story of God's redemptive interaction in Egypt caused God's people, the Hebrews, to be vulnerable. The new king, seeing that the Hebrew people were multiplying, feared their numbers and the possible resulting threat to his kingdom. His issuance of an order for all midwives to kill all Hebrew male babies by throwing them in the Nile was Satan's way of snuffing out

²⁴ Henry Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and doing the will of God* (Nashville: Lifeway Press 1990), 101-104.

Moses' potential from the very beginning. It was the enemy's strategy to put a stop to the continuance of God's larger redemptive story.

In Moses' story, it can clearly be seen that this crisis is a danger as well as an opportunity. The Nile that was meant to be a deathbed became a portal way to Moses' destiny and purpose. The river carried him toward the daughter of the Pharaoh who rescued him and brought him into the palace. Growing up in the palace allowed for Moses to receive the best possible education. It also made him a member of the royal family. This would take him out of obscurity and cause him to be known by the people. An unknown person might have great difficulty getting his message out or getting people to care to follow him. Once again it can be seen that God is using each aspect of Moses' story for godly purpose and that he is redeeming crisis in Moses' life to bring forth greater influence.

Moses will have the unique opportunity in his earliest formative years to be nursed and nurtured by his birth mother (Exodus 2:7-10). It is possible that this is how he gains his first understanding of and identification with the Hebrew people and the Hebrew faith. Without this unique identifying feature, the Hebrew slaves may never have trusted him and therefore might never have followed Moses. This identification caused Moses to instinctively protect a Hebrew slave who is mistreated by a cruel Egyptian taskmaster. Seeking to stop the brutality, he kills the Egyptian and when he realizes that his deed has become known, runs to the desert for escape (Exodus 2:11-12).

Fleeing to the desert is a pivotal time of crisis in Moses' life. He has left all that was comfortable and familiar. He is now a runaway convict. This is perhaps the most

pivotal crisis in Moses' life. The identity shift from being a Prince of Egypt to being a renegade must have shaken Moses to his inner most being. Moses would have to make a decision as to his identity and the Bible states that Moses chose to identify with the plight of God's people rather than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin (Hebrews 11:25).

The desert was a moment of crisis for Moses and with the danger comes opportunity. The danger was that Moses would now lose all that he had gained in Egypt and fade away into obscurity. Once a man of prestige and power, Moses now herds animals. In this time of seeming displacement, he marries Zipporah, gains a family, and becomes proficient in desert survival and navigation. He also learns lessons on how to delegate from his father-in-law, Jethro (Exodus 18:13-26). These lessons will help sustain him amidst the heavy responsibilities that will be placed upon his shoulders when he leads the Hebrew people out of Egypt.

Zipporah will at one point save Moses' life (Exodus 4:18-31). Jethro will install needed skill sets in Moses' life that will keep Moses from failing due to burnout.

Learning the ways of the desert will likely prove invaluable as God's great deliverer guides what is likely more than a million men, women, and children toward the Promise Land. As Moses extracts every possible lesson from the desert years, he gains valuable insights and necessary relationships to help him excel for the upcoming work. Moses recited his weaknesses and perhaps he felt they would disqualify him. In Exodus 3:11 Moses tells God, "I am a nobody." (GNT). In Exodus 4:1 he questions how others will perceive him saying, "what if they do not believe me" (NIV). In Exodus 4:10 he states, "I have never been eloquent" (NIV). He brings his apprehensions to a conclusion

in Exodus 4:13 when he states, “Please send someone else” (NIV). Despite these deflections, God uses Moses because he has a redemptive purpose for Moses that, although presenting danger, is also an opportunity.

Rabbi David Baron states, God used Moses’ weaknesses, transforming them into critical assets.²⁵ The Hebrew name Moses means, “drawn out of.” He was drawn out of the Nile river that was intended by the king to be his burial place (Exodus 2:10). Later, Moses drew the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt (Exodus 14). He was liberated to liberate others. God redeemed Moses’ dark side and brought him from a place of doing things in his own strength to doing them in God’s strength. In the book, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership*, McIntosh and Rima state that the dark side refers to our, “inner urges, compulsions, motivations, and dysfunctions that drive us toward success or undermine our accomplishments.”²⁶ Richard Foster writes that Moses “has to go into the desert for forty years to learn the difference between human manipulation and divine power.”²⁷

McIntosh and Rima suggest that Moses had a compulsive and controlling personality.²⁸ If Moses’ dark side was that he needed to be in control and relied on his own strength, one can see that God used the crisis moments of his life to bring him to a place where he is described as the most humble man ever to live (Numbers 12:3). J.

25 Rabbi David Baron with Lynette Padwa, *Moses on Management: 50 Leadership Lessons from the Greatest Manager of All Time* (New York: Pocket Books 1999), 5.

26 Gary L. McIntosh and Samuel D. Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: How to Become an Effective Leader by Confronting Potential Failures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books 1997), 29.

27 Richard Foster, *Money, Sex and Power* (San Francisco: Harper and Row; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), 216-217.

28 McIntosh and Rima, 86, 90.

Oswald Sanders states, “We do not read about ‘Moses, my leader, but Moses, my servant.’”²⁹ God did not waste any aspect of Moses’ story; he simply redeemed each submitted element.

Each crisis moment for Moses became a lesson to be passed on to others. Rabbi David Baron notes how Moses created a long list of rules instructing the liberated Israelites on how to treat slaves.³⁰ The idea that former slaves would need such lessons at first seems absurd, but Moses seemed to recognize the tendency of the once abused to become abusers. Rabbi Baron calls this “passing along the sting.”³¹ Crisis, when redeemed, stops the cycle of the sting. This too is evidence of the influence that comes from lessons learned by Moses over his lifetime.

Moses would lead the Israelite slaves out of Egyptian bondage toward the Promised Land. He would not be allowed to enter the prized land due to displeasing God when he took things into his own hands, striking a rock to bring forth water (Numbers 20:11). This too, must have been a major crisis point for Moses. Again, we see God’s redemptive power as Moses is brought to the Promised Land, supernaturally years later by Jesus at the Mt. of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-3). Here Moses would stand with Jesus showing that redeemed crises influence the purposes of God.

29 . Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership (Commitment to Spiritual Growth)* (Second revised) (Chicago: Moody Press 1994), 21.

30 Baron, 243.

31 Baron, 244.

Joseph

The story of Joseph is the story of a family. In Genesis 37:2 one reads the words, “This is the account of Jacob’s family line.” (NIV) What follows is a narrative that focuses primarily, not on Jacob but on Jacob’s son, Joseph. In biblical days, a family was viewed in terms of several generations (Exodus 20:5). Joseph was raised in a dysfunctional family. He experienced deep betrayal, was enslaved, falsely accused, imprisoned, and forgotten. Yet his meteoric rise to leadership and his decisions that led to the saving of God’s people in his generation make for one of the most powerful redemptive stories in the Bible.

Joseph was favored by his father and despised by his half-brothers who were jealous of the special love Joseph received from his father. It did not help that Joseph told his family about dreams in which he intimated that his family would one day bow to him. The ever-building animosity of his brothers resulted in them placing him into a pit and Joseph being sold into slavery. If not for Reuben, the most mature in age of the brothers, Joseph would be dead instead of enslaved. This outcome would not serve God’s larger plan. Joseph’s is a story of one who leaves the security of his homeland and finds that his identity is being reshaped by the crises that he faces. Joseph would go from being the favored son to being lost to his family and a slave in a land that was not his own.

Rejected by his brothers, separated from his father, lied about, and thrown into prison where he is forgotten, Joseph faced crisis after crisis. Joseph’s lowest point in the pit was the portal way to a land that, were he to continue life as usual, may never have been inhabited by Joseph. Rarely does one leave where they feel comfortable. Another

crisis occurred as he worked for Potiphar. Potiphar's wife made fabricated sexual allegations against Joseph (Genesis 39:6-20). Without the false accusation of Potiphar's wife, Joseph may have lived to old age managing Potiphar's house. Through each crisis, God's plan was being fulfilled.

For Joseph, that reshaping of his identity will be redemptive not only for him but for his family and an entire nation. Ultimately, Joseph will state that it was not his brothers who sent him off to Egypt but God himself (Genesis 45:8). God's meta-narrative is explained in stating that God sent Joseph ahead to Egypt to save the lives of his family by a great deliverance.

The Scriptures tell of blessings and curses that are passed down. Joseph's story is that of redeeming a family and in a larger sense preserving God's people. After Joseph becomes a Prince and has an interchange with his brothers, they do not recognize him. This encounter is a preliminary step in the redemption process in the lives of Joseph's family. The narrative could have taken a very different course. Joseph could have exacted revenge on the brothers who considered killing him. They were willing to have him lead a life of perpetual servitude. It would have been within his power to imprison or even execute his brothers, but he did not. When Joseph reveals his true identity to his brothers, he responds to them in an opposite spirit. He breaks the cycle of dysfunction and calls them to their true identity and story. When their father Jacob dies, Joseph's half-brothers fear that Joseph will seize the moment to treat them harshly (Genesis 50:15). Instead, Joseph treats them with kindness as to their true identity as the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:1-28).

In his book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Peter Scazzero writes, “Joseph was very aware of his past. Think of a play and a script being handed to an actor for a certain part. Most of us never examine the scripts handed to us by our past. Joseph did. He thought about it and then he opened the door to God’s future by rewriting it with God.” Joseph practiced that art of reframing.³² The definition of reframing is: “To look at, present, or think of in a new or different way.”³³ Most people would view family betrayal, displacement, slavery, and imprisonment in a very negative way and would come to the conclusion that their lives were cursed. Joseph reframed his story. He declared that what others intended for his harm, God brought about for good (Genesis 50:20). Gills Exposition of the Entire Bible shares this insight,

But as for you, ye thought evil against me. That must be said and owned, that their intentions were bad; they thought to have contradicted his dreams, and made them of none effect, to have taken away his life, or however to have made him a slave all his days: but God meant it unto good; he designed good should come by it, and he brought good out of it: this shows that this action, which was sinful in itself, fell under the decree of God, or was the object of it, and that there was a concurrence of providence in it; not that God was the author of sin, which neither his decree about it, nor the concurrence of providence with the action as such supposes; he leaving the sinner wholly to his own will in it, and having no concern in the ataxy or disorder of it, but in the issue, through his infinite wisdom, causes it to work for good.³⁴

Joseph viewed himself as blessed, not cursed. He had been transformed as each crisis was redeemed. The result was not only the saving of many lives but the continuance of the

³² Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a revolution in your life in Christ* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson 2006), 113.

³³ Collins Dictionary, “Reframe,” <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/English/reframe> accessed May 10, 2015.

³⁴ “John Gills Exposition of the Entire Bible Commentary.” Bible Study Tools. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/>.

line of the tribes of Judah through his brothers. Once more crisis is seen as being redeemed and reframed to impact, influence, and further God's meta-narrative.

David

The concept of reframing in Joseph's story was seen in context of viewing the events of his life in hindsight. The story of David shows us that reframing can be life changing when exercised in the decision-making process prior to an event. This lesson is found in a dialogue between David and Abigail (1 Samuel 25).

Abigail was married to Nabal. It was the season to shear sheep and to share in one's bounty with others. David, who is not yet king, was on the run from King Saul. David is joined by 400 men. Although David has the manpower to steal Nabal's sheep and feed his men, he does not do so. When David's men tell Nabal of David's kindness, Nabal disrespectfully belittles David by acting as if he has never heard of him. David's good deed is met with disdain. This slight angers David who rallies his men to war and charges toward Nabal. Abigail, recognizing her husband's folly, immediately heads toward David with gifts. Two caravans careen toward each other. One caravan is bent on revenge, the other on healing and they are about to converge. Abigail appeals to David's honor with a specific focus on David's future in terms of how his future will be affected by the decision he is about to make. She tells him that he will not regret in the future blood that he does not shed today (1 Samuel 25:31). Her words touch David, and he stops his advance toward Nabal. This exchange between David and Abigail proves redemptive.

Nabal died shortly afterwards but not by David's sword. David married Abigail. She changed his life by reframing his heart. One will never regret refraining from

indulging the dark side of our nature. David was known as a “man after God’s own heart” and, from what we know of Abigail, she helped point him in that direction (Acts 13:22).

David is one of the best-known figures in the Old Testament. Not only do the Scriptures share the historical account of his life from being a shepherd boy to his death as Israel’s greatest king, but we are also privileged to know his inner most thoughts as recorded in the Psalms. David was overlooked by his father, Jesse when the prophet Samuel comes to anoint the next king. He faced Goliath alone, he ran for his life from King Saul, he suffered for succumbing to temptation with Bathsheba, he knew family dysfunction, and nearly lost his kingdom. All were crisis points in the story of David and yet he is known today as a “man after God’s own heart.” Although David sinned greatly, he also repented greatly and his faith to run at Goliath speaks to a highly admirable faithfulness. His is a story reframed by his relationship with God. His leadership abilities were shaped by the reframing and redeeming of his life. Through everything his trajectory always went back to God.

Paul

Paul’s story of redemptive leadership shows how God can transform an enemy of the Gospel into a hero of the faith. Present at the stoning of Christianity’s first martyr, Paul’s effort to rid the earth of these Jesus followers was tireless (Acts 8:3). His intentions were sincere. He was a disciple of Gamaliel, a loyal Jew, and a faithful student of Judaism. He sought to keep his faith pure. When Saul (Paul) was taking a journey on the road to Damascus to further persecute Christians, he encountered Jesus. His conversion to Christianity was an about face from the identity he once knew. Those whose favor he once courted now viewed him as an outcast. Acts 9:27 states that Paul

was also feared and rejected by the disciples of the one who has now called him into ministry, Jesus. Paul was, at this stage of his life, an outcast on all sides.

This crisis parlayed Paul into having greater influence than he could ever have imagined. The outcast would now become the spokesman for other outcasts. As Peter and other influential voices sought to bar non-Jews from the faith if they did not adhere to ceremonial and eating rituals, Paul sought to release unneeded requirements. Paul advocated dropping the need for circumcision and food laws as a requirement for being admitted into the faith (Galatians 5:11-13, 1 Corinthians 7:18, Acts 15:1-19). John B. Polhill notes,

To insist that Gentiles undergo Jewish proselyte procedure was to insist that one had to become a Jew first in order to be a Christian. To do so would have guaranteed that Christianity would remain a sect within Judaism and never have any real impact on Gentiles. Paul knew this. He was convinced that God was reaching out to the Gentiles in Jesus Christ. He also knew that such restrictive provisions of the Torah as circumcision and the food laws would in effect close the door to most Gentiles. Such provisions had always served to maintain Jewish identity. Should the Christians have insisted upon them, it would have ensured that Christianity would stay a strictly Jewish movement with little impact on the Gentile world.³⁵

Out of Paul's crises came an identity that he otherwise would never have acquired. Paul became the champion to the outsider and outcast. He became the Gentile's greatest hope and was known as the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul would exert his influence by all means possible. He used the spoken word, letters, modeling, testimony, prayers, and mentoring. Because Paul's story was redeemed, and his crises transformed, Paul's worst rejection became the Gentile's greatest acceptance.

³⁵ John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group 1999), 106-107.

Paul would boast in his weaknesses because he knew that in so doing, he would highlight God's grace and ability to redeem. Paul's life story is a powerful indicator that God seeks and saves what would seem to many a lost cause. God redeems what others reject. He delights in using that on which others give up. Out of redeemed crises comes influence.

Paul would experience a profound identity shift when he encountered Jesus. He went from being the chief persecutor of the church to arguably being its most ardent supporter. During his lifetime he would contend with a mysterious "thorn in the flesh," be questioned by fellow believers as to the authenticity of his testimony and be persecuted and imprisoned. God reframed his story and as a result Paul championed the cause of the Gentiles, wrote a significant portion of the New Testament, spread the Gospel, and planted churches. His life was reframed and redeemed so that not only he, but many others would come to know Redemption.

Jesus

As this paper has looked at various men whose lives redeemed others, it would not be complete without a look at the Redeemer and greatest storyteller himself. Jesus intentionally related spiritual truths by way of story. In Matthew 13:35 he stated, "I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world." (ESV). Parables would be used to bring greater understanding of spiritual truths including love, prayer, and the kingdom of God. Parables constitute approximately one-third of Jesus' teaching.³⁶ Dr. Clarence E. Macartney states, "The difference between the

³⁶ Madeleine Boucher, *The Parables* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier 1980), 9.

parables of Jesus and those of the Old Testament consists in the fact that nearly all the parables of Jesus teach a spiritual truth that is timeless, and has no particular relation to or connection with the occasion or condition of utterance.”³⁷ Jesus’ stories interjected eternal truths into everyday life. He introduced a meta-narrative. He spoke to farmers and fishermen in relatable terms, yet the truth he was sharing revealed kingdom principles.

Jesus also used reframing. When Jesus called his very first disciples, he approached them while they were participating in their profession of fishing. Jesus entered their routines and called them to a higher purpose tied to God’s meta-narrative. In Matthew 4:18-19 the Bible states, “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake for they were fishermen. ‘Come follow me’, Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people’.” (NIV)

“Ultimately Jesus is the redemption available to each and every person. He is the reframing. He is the one who allows us to see ourselves in light of God’s larger narrative and purpose. He is the model of leadership in its most pure form and his example radically challenges all definitions of leadership that are constructed on selfish ambition.

Jesus must have contended with the identity shift from being omnipresent and omnipotent to being in one place at one time and finite. The limitations of the flesh could not have been easy. One can feel the deep struggle in Jesus as he asks God to remove the cup from him in the Garden of Gethsemane. The idea that holy God must somehow take

³⁷ Dr. Clarence E. Macartney, *The Parables of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications 1995), 9.

the sins of all mankind upon him and die on a cross is unfathomable. The agony of the cross physically, mentally, and spiritually is a crisis beyond comprehension. What the enemy meant for harm became the way to God, the truth that counters all lies and the hope of eternal life. Unlike other lives that have been examined, Jesus' life did not need reframing. His life purpose was redemption, not of himself, but the entire world.

Summary

In this chapter a clear contrast between biblical leadership and the world's definition of leadership was considered. The many and varied challenges unique to leaders that have within them the potential to disqualify leaders were outlined. The scriptures were presented as a book composed primarily of stories that ultimately focused on God's larger meta-narrative of the gospel story. Crises and how they have within them the potential to either harm and anchor or parlay to greater redemptive influence was considered. A study of the biblical biographies of Joseph, Moses, David, Paul and Jesus brought a deeper understanding of how God can take a moment of crisis and bring forth redemptive purpose. Reframing, both before and after a crisis was referenced showing the power of recognizing that God is always writing a story in our lives that is rife with redemptive potential.

In Chapter three, sources from modern literature will be presented in consideration of how God continues the process of developing leaders today by entering into their stories, redeeming their crises, and thereby empowering their influence. Do we each have a unique story out of which can be drawn eternal meaning? Are our crisis

points ticking bombs just waiting to destroy us or can they be a means for us to reach our greatest influence for good? This writer continues to explore these questions.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership

Chapter two drew from the rich resources of scripture clarifying that leadership is an honorable goal and further defining the example of leadership in its purest form as modeled by Jesus. Biblical biographies focused on how leaders benefited from crisis to fully attain God's meta-narrative producing eternal influence in the lives of others. In chapter three, insights from modern literature will grapple with the true meaning of leadership, the value of crisis and influence that surpasses selfish intent. Keeping leadership healthy and thus sustaining a leader's longevity will also be considered.

History is filled with individuals who marked the landscape of time with noble and ignoble purpose. As one studies the times, places and events that have shaped our history, nation and world, key leaders emerge whose lives impacted the lives of others. This is true on both a global and personal level. Leaders influence lives and the need for honorable, healthy leaders who will fulfill this calling is paramount.

Dr. Leighton Ford notes the quest to find leaders in our generation as he draws from the Leadership Papers of John Gardner, "Looking at the American scene, John Gardner in his Leadership Papers has pointed out that at the time the United States was formed it had a population of around three million. Out of that emerged perhaps six world-class leaders- Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison and Hamilton.

Today with a population of around 240 million, the U.S.A. might expect to have eighty times as many world-class leaders. But, he asks, where are they?”³⁸

Perhaps a search for leaders is best begun with an understanding of what constitutes leadership. Definitions are numerous and varied. J. Oswald Sanders challenges the idea that leadership should be considered in terms as shallow as ambition, noting that the Latin word for ambition means, “campaigning for promotion”³⁹ He goes on to state, “is it not better for the position to seek out the person rather than the person to seek out the position?”⁴⁰ Dr. Leighton Ford writes, “Genuine leaders operate out of a sense of calling, not a sense of drivenness.”⁴¹

If the path to leadership is mere ambition its ultimate destination can be one lacking in strength of character and moral authority. This is shaky ground upon which to build one’s leadership portfolio. In the book, *Jesus Driven Ministry*, Ajith Fernando states, “How real this temptation is to us today! We reason, ‘If we get to the top, how much good we could do for so many people. Aren’t a few compromises a small price to pay for a position of such influence?’ In our world success is measured by size, influence, and other trappings of power, such as how many people we have working for us. Therefore, the lure of success is all the more real and a common temptation in the world of business and government. A person will bend the rules a bit to grant the wish of a powerful person, who in turn will sponsor his promotion in his job. It is common to hear

38 Dr. Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus’ Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 1991), p 23

39 J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Commitment to Spiritual Growth* Second revised (Chicago: Moody Press 1994), 15.

40 Sanders, 13.

41 Ford, 37.

of people giving sexual favors to top people so that their chances of upward mobility may be enhanced.”⁴²

Character is critical in the ascent to leadership and is essential when it comes to sustaining the ultimate impact and legacy of one’s leadership. The media is constantly sharing the stories of leaders who have been exposed in areas of ethical and sexual misconduct. These leaders vary in vocation from government leaders to military, from preachers to schoolteachers. As people debate whether or not one’s personal character has any impact on one’s public duties and performance, careers are being destroyed, personal lives devastated, and legacies tarnished. Public figures are seeking the acclaim of the masses but too often seek to disassociate from the responsibilities that come with being labeled as a “role model.”

Dr. Tim Elmore gives a great analogy of the importance of character and how it pertains to one’s public persona and impact. He states, “An iceberg is an interesting picture of the first rule of leadership.” Using the analogy of an iceberg, Dr. Elmore suggests the idea that the 10% above the water is one’s skill and the 90% below the water is one’s character. He states that it is what is below the surface that sinks ships.⁴³

The Redemptive Model

The Redemptive Leadership Model developed by Dr. Harvey Powers and communicated in the Redemptive Leadership program sets forth the importance

⁴² Ajith Fernando, *Jesus Driven Ministry*. (Crossway Books 2002), 84.

⁴³ Dr. Tim Elmore, *Habitudes: Images that form Leadership Habits & Attitudes* (Growing Leaders, Inc. 2004)1.

of principle-based leadership over mere competency.⁴⁴ Principle is defined as the underlying truths, which transcend situations. Dr. Powers states that principles trump competency. It speaks of a “way of being” as opposed to a fixation on mere skill sets alone.

The next key concept in the Redemptive Leadership model is character. Character affects all areas of life and is a critical factor in sustainability. One’s impact will be added to or subtracted from, in relation to one’s character. Character is shaped by one’s life experiences and reflects the deeper structures of our lives. It is composed of both strengths and weaknesses. Romans 5:3 focuses on “proven character” that results from tribulation and produces perseverance.⁴⁵ The result is proven character that imparts trust.

The Redemptive Model illustrates the key components in the process of moving a leader or organization from “external doing” to “internal being” and from “Task Accomplishment” to “purpose and meaning.” A person may begin with competency but must continue in the process to the principle and character stages in order to become a transformational and redemptive leader. Each stage builds on the next.

Transformational leaders see their goal as unleashing leadership in others and bringing forth another’s full potential. They focus on the genuine change of the heart. Transformation is often on the heels of crisis and testing. It is “because of” and not “in spite of” hardship and being stretched that one attains the moral

⁴⁴ Dr. Harvey Powers, “Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development,” Class Notes.

⁴⁵ Romans 5:3 -4

authority to lead another to a place of also being transformed. It is when one yields amidst one's brokenness that the weak is made strong. The end result is forgiveness, healing and an anointed testimony.

Redemptive leaders understand that they have been redeemed from the curse and set free at a price. No longer are the hardships and failures of their lives limiting factors, but they now view them as the very reason God uses them. Redemptive leaders help others see that God is at work in them and that life's most challenging moments are not without value but on the contrary, can be greatly used for God's glory as they are redeemed.

A Process

The Redemptive Leadership Model shows that leadership is a process. One is not "born a leader." Dr. J. Robert Clinton states in his book, *The Making of a Leader*, "Leadership is a lifetime of lessons."⁴⁶ Dr. Clinton goes on to say, "As a leader you should recognize that God is continually developing you over a lifetime. His top priority is to conform you to the image of Christ for ministry and spiritual authority. Enduring fruitfulness flows out of being."⁴⁷

If we are learning from a series of life lessons and if leadership is a process, what is the reason for the lessons and the purpose for the process? Although the definition of leadership can be varied, in the final analysis, leadership is influence. Bill Thrall defines leadership as, "Influencing Others." He goes on to state, "When one life touches another in a family, community,

⁴⁶ J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NavPress 1988), 40.

⁴⁷ Clinton, 54.

organization or culture, the effect is called influence.”⁴⁸ Dr.

Harvey Powers focuses more directly on leadership as connected to God’s purpose when he states, “Leadership is influencing others to release their redemptive potential in fulfilling their purpose under God.”⁴⁹ Dr. Robert Clinton notes that a biblical leader is a person with a “God-given capacity and with God-given responsibility to influence a specific group of God’s people toward his purposes for the group.”⁵⁰

Leadership Challenges

Fulfilling our God-given responsibility to influence others toward God’s purposes is not without its challenges. This is especially true in today’s society. Dr. Will Miller states that there are three major social changes with which we must contend: increased mobility, heavy social emphasis on individualism and emotionally numbing distractions.⁵¹ The result is isolationism. Today’s leaders have ever increasing demands, the pressure of high expectations and often feel that any sign of weakness can leave them vulnerable.

Dr. Paul Stoltz in his book, *Adversity Quotient*, defines success as, “the degree to which one moves forward and upward, progressing in one’s lifelong mission, despite all obstacles or other forms of adversity.”⁵² Each life is laced with adversity. The stories of

⁴⁸ Bill Thrall, Redemptive Leadership handout

⁴⁹ Dr. Harvey Powers, Redemptive Leadership Handout

⁵⁰ Clinton, 202.

⁵¹ Dr. Will Miller, *Refrigerator Rights: Creating Connections and Restoring Relationships* (The Berkley Group: Penguin Putnam, Inc. 2002), xiii.

⁵² Dr. Paul G. Stoltz, *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1997), 5.

our lives are each unique in their high and low points. Each is worthy of analyzing in order to draw out the larger narrative and translate lessons into influence whereby they touch the lives of others.

Story

As established in chapter two, the importance of story and its conveyance from one generation to another is as ancient as the book of Genesis. Kendall Haven states in his book, *Story Proof*,

“Humans have told, used and relied on stories for over 100,000 years. Written communication began only 6,000 to 7,000 years ago. Modern expository forms of argument, persuasion and logic developed well after that. Most western cultures began in Masse, to read and write only a few hundred years ago. Before that, oral stories were the dominant form through which history, news, values, cultural, heritage, and attitudes were passed from person to person and from generation to generation.”⁵³

The idea that story telling is critical to our understanding history and ourselves is evident. Christina Baldwin notes the deep need within each of us to share in terms of story by stating that our brains are “biologically wired” for storytelling. Baldwin states, “Story - the abundance of it, and lack of it – gives us place, lineage, history, a sense of self.”⁵⁴ Perhaps Zora Neale Hurston best described the inner hunger in each of us to share our story when she wrote, “there is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”⁵⁵

⁵³ Kendall Haven, *Story Proof*. (Libraries Unlimited: The Greenwood Publishing Group 2007), 3-4.

⁵⁴ Christina Baldwin, *Storycatcher: Making Sense of Our Lives through the power and Practice of Story* (New World Library 2005), 3.

⁵⁵ *The Cambridge Companion to Autobiography*: Edited by Maria Dibattista and Emily O. Wittman (Cambridge University Press 2014), 15.

The inner longing people have to tell their story has taken on a whole new look due to modern technology. The Internet and satellite technology have introduced Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Each is a means by which we seek to reveal ourselves, to tell our story. Story telling in modern form allows for an immediate sharing on a global basis.

Story telling has proven itself to be a very effective means by which to make a lasting impact. Most of life is eventually lost to memory. Kendall Haven draws from studies that show that: experiences not framed into story form suffer loss of memory.”⁵⁶ Movie director, Stephen Spielberg, recognized this truth and went to great efforts to record the personal stories of holocaust survivors while filming the movie, *Schindler’s List* before those stories were lost to time. In a general sense, story can be defined as: “a detailed, character-based narration of a character’s struggle to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal.”⁵⁷ Story takes on a deeper, more personal meaning when it is the story of oneself. Within this context, one embarks on a search for meaning. In his journal, Kierkegaard wrote, “The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wants me to do; the thing is to find a truth which is true for me, to find the idea for which I can live and die.”⁵⁸

The author of *Story Catcher*, Christina Baldwin, describes self-story as being, “composed of those events, relationships and reactions that make the cut into conscious

⁵⁶ Haven, 4.

⁵⁷ Haven, 79.

⁵⁸ Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (W Publishing Group: Thomas Nelson, Inc 2003), 3.

memory. We link these memories together to create a coherent narrative.”⁵⁹ In the first modular of the Redemptive Leadership doctoral program, Dr. Rod Cooper invited each of the doctoral students to share three high points and three low points that have been defining moments in each of our life stories. Along with these high and low points we were to consider what we believe God was saying to each of us at these key moments.

This was an introduction to our self-stories.

Dorothy Allison states, “I am the only one who can tell the story of my life and say what it means.”⁶⁰ The conscious, intentional linking together of defining moments in each of our lives constitutes our life’s narrative. To understand ourselves we must capture our unique stories and ascertain their meaning. The author of *Story Catcher*, Christina Baldwin calls her readers to this process with a powerful, probing question, “What event or experience in your life have you ridden to wisdom?”⁶¹

In his book, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Peter Scazzero notes that, “Very few emerge out of their families of origin emotionally whole or mature.”⁶² Scazzero draws from the lives of biblical heroes to show what he believes to be the widespread nature of family dysfunction. He followed Josephs’ line of predecessors and noted the following:

A Pattern of Lying In Each Generation

⁵⁹ Baldwin, 124.

⁶⁰ Baldwin, 21.

⁶¹ Baldwin, 114.

⁶² Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a revolution in your life in Christ* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson 2006), 12.

Abraham lied twice about Sarah.

Isaac and Rebecca's marriage was characterized by lies.

Jacob lied to almost everyone; his name means "deceiver."

Ten of Jacob's children lied about Joseph's death, faking a funeral, and keeping a "family secret" for over ten years.

Favoritism By At Least One Parent in Each Generation

Abraham favored Ishmael.

Isaac favored Esau

Jacob favored Joseph and later Benjamin

Brothers Experiencing a Cutoff from one Another in Each Generation

Isaac and Ishmael (Abraham's sons) were cut off from one another.

Jacob fled his brother Esau and was completely cut off for years.

Joseph was cut off from his ten brothers for over a decade.

Even with all these sins, God's redemptive plan is not thwarted, In fact, as previously stated; God uses these people because of the crises, not in spite of them.⁶³

Perhaps it can be stated that generational sins follow the heart and that an attitude of serving God verses serving self-precipitates God's favor instead of his displeasure.

⁶³ Scazzero, 98.

The maturity needed to accurately find meaning in the narrative of one's life can be lacking, yielding more questions than answers. Scazzero describes the end result that often occurs when he states, "Many go to the grave unconsciously living someone else's life or expectation for us."⁶⁴ The loudest voices that one listens to when seeking to find meaning to one's story are too often those of individuals who lack the capacity to give more than a surface analysis.

For the believer there is a step beyond seeking to ascertain meaning from one's own story by relying solely on oneself or others for accurate interpretation. Whereas we seek a coherent narrative from the linking together of events, the meaning can, too often seem elusive. C.S. Lewis writes about a greater source than ourselves when it comes to capturing one's story and its meaning in his fifth book of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Horse and His Boy*.

The boy, Shasta encounters Aslan and hears from Aslan's own lips the story of his life. Aslan brings fresh meaning to Shasta's journey. Shasta asks Aslan to elaborate on the meaning of events pertaining to his traveling companion, Aravis. Aslan's response is profound, "I'm telling you your story, not hers. I tell no one any story but his own."⁶⁵ No one better understands the master narrative of our lives than our creator. No truly accurate interpretation of our lives' highs and lows can be found outside of God.

⁶⁴ Scazzero, 66.

⁶⁵ C.S. Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy* (Geoffrey Bles 1954), 159.

Crisis

Dr. Harvey Powers states, “after salvation, the grand theme is maturity.” The maturing process can be found in a series of lessons that last for a lifetime.⁶⁶ God uses the totality of our lives, both good and bad to mold and shape us. Dr. Harvey Powers states it well when he says, “God shapes us in, through and because of our story.”⁶⁷

Beneath the surface each of us have challenges. These challenges can be internal and external. Dru Dodson defines each crisis moment as, “a stage in a sequence of events at which the trend of all future events is determined.”⁶⁸ Such moments reveal us, as to whether our identity is found in the external (doing) or the internal (being). Crisis provokes action and necessitates change. Crisis is the hinge upon which the future swings.

Dr. Robert Clinton writes, “What we truly are is revealed in a crisis.”⁶⁹ Nothing measures us as accurately as crisis for it has a way of stripping our facades. Our flight to place image over substance is challenged. Dr. Robert Clinton states, “Crisis process items are special intense pressure situations in life that are used by God to test and to teach dependence on God.”⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Dr. Harvey Powers, “Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development,” Class Notes. May 2011.

⁶⁷ Dr. Harvey Powers, “Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development,” Class Notes. May 2011.

⁶⁸ Dru Dodson, Class Notes, May 2013.

⁶⁹ Clinton, 107.

⁷⁰ Clinton, 144.

Our response to crisis speaks to whether or not we are capturing the moment to not only learn but to be transformed. Dr. Clinton notes that, “All leaders are constantly being trained by God but not all of them learn from the training.”⁷¹ The fact is that some get entrenched in what they already are where as others ride crisis to a place of greater wisdom. Dru Dodson speaks of the moment in the book of Genesis when Jacob wrestles, first to get away and then to be blessed when he applies the lesson to us in modern day, “When we face crises we wrestle.”⁷² Crisis necessitates discernment so that our response is not fight or flight but rather perseverance to find the God narrative and therein embrace the transformational moment that leads to greater maturity.

In their book, *The Critical Journey*, authors Janet O. Hagberg and Robert A. Guelich write about the struggle to find meaning, wholeness, and a sense of identity in life. Chapter seven deals with what they refer to as “The Wall.” They state, “Our wrestling with the Wall plays a vital role in the process of our spiritual healing... The Wall represents our will meeting God’s will face to face... We are trying to deal with the Wall in the same way we have gotten through life- on the strength of our own will or gifts.”⁷³

Peter Scazzero writes, “The Walls we hit in our journey with God are gifts from him.”⁷⁴ Walls tell us that action is needed in order to continue forward. They challenge the status quo and teach us valuable lessons if we recognize them as God’s prompts for us

⁷¹ Clinton, 90.

⁷² Dodson, Class Notes, May 2013.

⁷³ Janet Hagberg, Robert A. Guelich, *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith* (Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ 1989), 114.

⁷⁴ Scazzero, 21.

to change. Dr. Robert Clinton states, “A leader who wishes to have long-term influence will need to learn how to implement changes.”⁷⁵ The redemptive process translates moments of crisis from moments of loss without meaning to those moments that further clarify one’s life purpose. The authors of *The Critical Journey*, describe a redeemed crisis as being when, “I own my weaknesses and let them become my strengths.”⁷⁶

Chuck Colson served as special counsel for President Richard Nixon and ultimately spent time in a federal prison for his role as a Watergate conspirator. While awaiting sentencing, Mr. Colson made a decision to accept Jesus as his Lord and Savior, after reading C.S. Lewis’ *Mere Christianity*. During his time in prison, he saw that prisoners were incarcerated but no one was helping them to get better. Chuck Colson parlayed that experience into founding the Prison Fellowship, the largest prison ministry in the world.

Mr. Colson stated, “As I sat on the platform waiting my turn at the pulpit, my mind began to drift back in time...to scholarships and honors earned, cases argued and won, great decisions made from lofty government offices. My life had been the perfect success story, the great American dream fulfilled. But all at once I realized that it was not my success God had used to enable me to help those in this prison, or in hundreds of others jut like it.

“My life of success was not what made this morning glorious – all my achievements meant nothing in God’s economy. No, the real legacy of my life was my

⁷⁵ Clinton, 89.

⁷⁶ Hagberg, 146 – 147.

biggest failure – that I was an ex- convict. My greatest humiliation- being sent to prison – was the beginning of God’s greatest use of my life; He chose the one experience in which I could not glory for His glory.”⁷⁷

Perhaps Mr. Colson’s time in prison was the time God most had his attention. Such seasons when we intentionally seek meaning amidst confusion and ambiguity can be life’s most meaningful moments. Like the period of time the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, our wandering times prepare us to recognize and seize our purpose in life. We learn lessons and then apply.

In their book, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership*, Gary L. McIntosh and Samuel D. Rima, Sr. present the idea that, although many leaders are unaware, every leader has some degree of dysfunction. The authors see this dark side as a natural result of human development. It can appear in the form of anger, compulsions, pride, and control. This dysfunction can be a driving force that leads to destruction or it can be redeemed and used for good.

As leaders, walking in the light and keeping the dark-side in check is a life long discipline. It is critical that one be self-aware and acknowledges that the dark-side exists. Dealing with what lies beneath the surface in our own lives helps us to avoid the pitfalls that so easily beset leaders.

Often, the shadow side of a person can be traced back to one’s childhood. Warren Bennis, author of, *On Becoming a Leader* states, “We cannot change the circumstances of

⁷⁷ Neil Cole, *Cultivating a Life for God* (Church Smart Resources 1999), 19.

our childhood, much less improve them at this late date, but we can recall them honestly, reflect on them, understand them, and thereby overcome their influence on us.

Withdrawal can be turned to hope, compulsion to will, inhibition to purpose, and inertia to competence through the exercises of memory and understanding.”⁷⁸ Adult leaders need not be held captive by hurts, unfulfilled expectations or any other limiting factors from childhood.

Forgiveness is a key factor in being released from the paralyzing effects of the failures and hurts of the past. Cultivating a sense of God’s presence and power helps in navigating the barrage of temptations, disappointments and outright attacks faced by leaders. The freedom to step beyond unrealistic expectations and the rat race is found in the grace of God.

Crisis brings us to a better understanding of who we are and how our influence, when spirit led can impact the lives of others. Dr. Robert Clinton states, “What we truly are is revealed in crises.”⁷⁹ He goes on to state, “God uses complications in general to develop inner-life maturity.”⁸⁰ Character is a vital component that can ultimately contribute to the brevity or longevity of one’s influence. The presence or lack of character will speak to the type of influence one exerts.

Robert Murray M’Cheyne expresses the direct connection between spirit-led character and godly influence when he writes, “My people’s greatest need is my personal

⁷⁸ Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader* (Basic Books 2009), 81.

⁷⁹ Clinton, 107.

⁸⁰ Clinton, 110.

holiness.”⁸¹ When leaders are exposed in moral and ethical failures the ripple effect touches the lives of others. Leadership worthy of respect is never centered in self but is constantly aware of lives that are impacted by those following. J. Oswald Sanders wrote, “Ambition that centers on the glory of God and welfare of the church is a mighty force for good.”⁸²

J. Oswald Sanders further states, “It is motivation that determines ambition’s character.”⁸³ When our greatest goal is to please God by learning God’s ways and acting upon His principles, we develop godly character. From godly character comes godly influence.

Spirit-Led, Biblical Leaders

In the beginning of this chapter it was expressed that there is a need for healthy, honorable leaders. Leadership based on selfish motive or other improper ambition greatly diminishes one’s ability to impact the lives of others towards honorable ends. In his book, *Jesus Driven Ministry*, Ajith Fernando states, “... the postmodern approach emphasizes the more subjective aspects of life- “my” feelings, “my” preferences, and “my” instincts.”⁸⁴

This is in stark contrast to the focus of the one who is arguably the greatest leader outside of Jesus in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul focuses not on self or feelings but on life objectives guided by the Holy Spirit. Empowerment for effectiveness is not

⁸¹ Fernando, 158.

⁸² Sanders, 15.

⁸³ Sanders, 14.

⁸⁴ Fernando, 21.

found primarily in education, wealth or any other outward influence but in divine guidance.

Ajith Fernando relates a personal study he performed: “In a statistical study of the occurrence of certain themes in Paul’s Epistles, I was able to find fifty-nine references covering eighty-one verses that connect the ministry of the Holy Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit and other holiness related issues in the lives of believers. Romans 8 is the classic statement of the Spirit’s ability to help us to live holy lives according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh.⁸⁵

To be Spirit-led is necessary as stated by J. Oswald Sanders who states, “Spiritual leadership requires spirit-filled people. Other qualities are important; to be spirit-filled is indispensable.”⁸⁶ To be Spirit-filled is at the core, not about what one does for a career but rather about the heart. After salvation, the grand theme is maturity.⁸⁷ It is a developmental process that occurs over time. Godliness is not instant.

Maturity in God that results in influencing others toward eternal purpose ⁸⁸:

1. Occurs over time (cannot skip).
2. Is sequential (Found in steps: Blocks)
3. Is Hierarchical
4. Is interrelated (syncretized)

⁸⁵ Fernando, 33.

⁸⁶ Sanders, 14.

⁸⁷ Dr. Harvey Powers, “Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development,” Class Notes. May 2011.

⁸⁸ Class Notes. May 2011.

According to Dr. Lee Spitzer we are all on two journeys:

1. Missional (we have a work to do). Dr. Robert Clinton states, “As a leader, you should recognize that God is continually developing you over a lifetime. His top priority is to conform you to the image of Christ for ministry and spiritual authority. Enduring fruitfulness flows out of being.”
2. Redemptive (God is redeeming us...we are the mission). Our core competencies come out of our natural strengths, but competency alone is not enough and won't sustain us. One's character will ultimately validate or invalidate one's influence. This is why we must persevere not by our own strength but by God's leading and sustenance.

Jesus used a Roman coin to illustrate a lesson when he asked, “Whose image is on this?” A tool for engraving marked the coin. As we remain under God's presence and guidance, we are marked by his eternal purposes rather than self-guided ones. We become those who enhance God's reputation rather than our own. It becomes a step-by-step maturing process whereby we are ever learning and developing into who God created us to be.

As we ascertain where God is at work maturing us, we can better understand how God is guiding us to lead others on a similar journey. Knowing that transformation begins in the heart, our focus will be on “being” over “doing.” We then find the purpose behind the actions that fill our lives. We step beyond being busy for busyness sake to being on a mission tied to God's priorities and purposes. It is by so doing that we come into

alignment with “the full story” of our lives and lead others to the same. Step by step, we are led toward the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Sustaining Leadership

It is imperative for a leader to recognize the rhythms of life so as to avoid being driven to a point of exhaustion. The trifecta of, “I am what I do”, “I am what I have” and “I am what others think of me” conforms one to the world.⁸⁹ The goal is to be transformed into the image of the greatest of all leaders, Jesus and to find our identity in him.

H. Norman Wrights quotes the Executive’s Digest, “The trouble with success is that the formula is the same as the one for a nervous breakdown.”⁹⁰ Learning to prioritize self- care can strengthen one’s chances of prolonged impact in the lives of others and finishing life well. It seems that the number one response when people are asked how they are doing is, “busy.” The constant demand of expectations and unique challenges that face leaders can too easily result in burnout, breakdowns and a feeling of giving up. The distinction between being called and being driven is easily lost.

Ecclesiastes 4:6 states, “One hand full of rest is better than two fists of labor and striving after wind.” Fred Mitchell states, “Beware of barrenness of a busy life.”⁹¹ It seems we are working harder than ever before. Modern technology has us multi-tasking with less down time, less rest and less personal interaction. As we exert ourselves at a

⁸⁹ Scazzero, 75 – 78.

⁹⁰ H. Norman Wright, *Success Over Stress* (Harvest House Publishers 1998), 65.

⁹¹ Gordon MacDonald: *Ordering Your Private World* (Oliver Nelson: Thomas Nelson Publishers 1985), 17.

greater level, it is all the more necessary to be proactive with self-care and to establish a support base. Henri Nouwen points out the need to maintain a “space in which God can act.”⁹² This helps prioritize development of who one “is becoming” over a primary emphasis on what one “is doing”. It elevates the person over the task. It ties into a biblical perspective of the Sabbath and of godly stewardship.

Reasonable limits should not be viewed as selfishness. It is a means by which one rediscovers God in one’s life narrative. Removing distractions allows an anchoring to one’s identity as found in Christ. It breaks the trajectory as described by Thoreau who stated, “The mass of men leads lives of quiet desperation.”⁹³ Beyond merely taking breaks, naps and vacations, leaders require seasons where they have a “rest of the soul” as mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 11:29. It is a repositioning and realignment of life that affects everything else. It is a call to come to God and find meaning once more in him. Finding God within and not outside of one’s vocation helps one find the value of work as being ordained of God.

Darrow L. Miller writes:” Our vocation is to be connected to the Kingdom of God, to the transforming Story. Within this Transforming Story, there are a number of elements. God is the King. The world is His Kingdom. We are stewards of the Kingdom for the King. The King has established fundamental principles-a Kingdom ethic or ethos-for governing His Kingdom. The task of the steward is to have dominion over creation (Genesis 12:26-28); the goal to extend the blessing of Abraham to all the nations

⁹² Richard A. Swenson: *The Overload Syndrome* (NavPress 1998), 17.

⁹³ Respectfully Quoted: *A Dictionary of Quotations* (Peter Pauper Press 1966. Originally published 1854), 8.

(Genesis 12:2-4) and to fulfill Christ's mandate to disciple the nations (Matthew 28:19,20), so that the glory of the nations will be prepared for Christ's return (Revelation 21:23-26). We are to do this as Christians, not outside the context of our work, and not merely in our work. We are to manifest the Kingdom of God through our work into a broken world.⁹⁴

Pausing, reflecting and renewing one's tie to God create meaning within the responsibilities faced by the leader. It enhances the ability to be led by the Holy Spirit while maintaining emotional and physical well-being. It is essential in order to run the race in such a manner as to win. It is a critical key to influencing others toward godliness.

Summary

In this chapter, principles and character were explored. Both are foundational to Redemptive Leadership. As has been shown through our literature review, the path to godly, redemptive leadership is a process. We are all on two journeys, Missional which pertains to the work we perform in life and Redemptive, meaning God is at work in us. We are challenged to persevere as ones marked by God for his eternal purposes rather than self-guided and self-focused purpose.

This is why we must persevere not by our own strength but by God's leading and sustenance. Perseverance in Greek translates "remaining under."⁹⁵ Character in Greek denotes being "engraved."⁹⁶ Jesus used a Roman coin to illustrate a lesson when he

⁹⁴ Darrow Miller with Mari and Newton Life Work (The Disciple Nations Alliance 2002), 155.

⁹⁵ Strong's, 5281.

⁹⁶ Strong's, 5481.

asked, “Whose image is on this?” (Matt. 22:20 NIV) A tool for engraving was used by its maker to mark the coin. Humans also are marked by their Maker. As we remain under God’s presence and guidance, we are marked by his eternal purposes rather than self-guided ones. We become those who enhance God’s reputation rather than our own. It becomes a step-by-step maturing process whereby we are ever learning and developing into who God created us to be, people of high character and principles.

In addition to looking at principles, character and maturity, this chapter also examined rest. Pausing, reflecting, and renewing one’s tie to God creates meaning within the responsibilities faced by the leader. It enhances the ability to be led by the Holy Spirit while maintaining emotional and physical well-being. It is essential in order to run the race in such a manner as to win. It is a critical key to influencing others toward godliness.

While these concepts are vital to an understanding of Redemptive Leadership, this research must be applied in order to structure the experiences into a workable framework. In the next chapter, a Leadership Forum will be presented with the idea that it will better train leaders at Capital Life Church and beyond to learn how to capture their life narratives, better understand God’s larger narrative and apply lessons to redeem crises into godly influence.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT

This chapter will examine and present a lesson plan drawn from the wide and varied materials set forth in chapters one through three. The research question that will need to be answered is, “will a curriculum for leaders from the Washington, DC area, based on the Redemptive Model, train leaders to view their life stories within the context of God’s larger narrative with particular emphasis on crisis being redeemed for greater influence”? The leaders who will be invited to attend will represent various careers, reflecting the area of the Nation’s Capital and will all be actively serving at Capital Life Church. The purpose is to train leaders to view their lives and purpose in terms of God’s meta- narrative, particularly as it relates to crisis in their lives. There will be a focus on how God redeems crisis and parlays it into greater influence for his glory. The format will be a Leadership Summit. A pre-test will be given prior to the sessions and a post-test will be taken at the conclusion of the sessions. Likert Scaling will be used.

Within the Leadership Summit, terms such as Leadership, Crisis and Influence will be defined. The role of story in the Bible and biblical biographies of Moses, Joseph, David, Paul, and Jesus will be considered with lessons extracted. Each leader attending will be encouraged to apply the teachings and consider the unique highs and lows of their own lives while seeking a God narrative. Reframing, The Dark Side of Leadership and Self-Care will be presented, providing tools for each leader to be able to sustain healthy effective impact in the days ahead. The goal will be to capture these truths within the

framework of the Redemptive Model while encouraging each participant to apply truths learned not only in their own lives but also in the lives of others.

Participants

Those participating will be personally invited and will be a part of a group of at least 10 leaders. These people will be residents of the D.C. metro area and members of Capital Life Church (where I serve as Lead Pastor), which meets in Arlington, Virginia.

Arlington is just over the bridge from N.E. Washington, D.C. It is in what is known as the “Beltway”. It is the home of the Pentagon and Arlington National Cemetery. The city boasts a population of approximately 225,200 people.⁹⁷ In 2018, Arlington was the 12th most densely populated jurisdiction in the United States (8728 persons per square mile). Arlington is an urban county of about 26 square miles.⁹⁸

The area within three miles of Capital Life Church boasts the highest percentage of people with a bachelor’s or graduate/professional degrees in the Washington, D.C. area with one in three having a graduate or professional degree. A large percentage of those who serve in government, military and media live in Arlington. The median income in 2018 is recorded to be \$166,173.99 In 2018 non-family households composed 53.3% of the population.¹⁰⁰ The majority of households, 44.5% contain only one person, with

⁹⁷ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

29.8% recording two people.¹⁰¹ This makes Arlington one of the largest communities of singles in the nation.

There is a diversity of races and cultures in the three-mile radius of the church. The majority are white (61.2%) followed by Hispanic (17.7%), Asian/other (14.4%), and black (6.7%).¹⁰² There is an even distribution of males and females. Most people are ages 25-44 (33.8%) followed by those 45-64 (24.1%) those under 18 (20.7%), those 18-24 (10.40%) and finally those 65 and older (9.4%).¹⁰³ The statistics describe a city that is one of the top cities in America in education and income. It is primarily composed of young professionals who are highly mobile. It is a highly transitional community and has experienced constant turnover as the young professionals add to their resume fulfilling their military tour, government term of service, etc. If one is working for an organization connected to the military or politics, one's job security is connected to sudden changes of assignment or the results of an election.

Capital Life Church was founded in 2002 and is perfectly located in the heart of Arlington, Virginia. Vast international communities combined with professionals who commute in and out of Washington, DC surround the church. The participants in the Leadership Summit will all be residents of the Arlington/DC area and members of the church. Capital Life Church was planted as a non-denominational church but merged with an Assembly of God church in 2014. The merge provided the church with a building

¹⁰¹ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

¹⁰² Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

¹⁰³ Elizabeth Hardy and Kristina Frazier, Arlington County Profile 2018, ebook Arlington, 2018, <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/04/2018Profile.pdf>.

(along with a parsonage) that has become a headquarters of hope. The vision of the church is “Loving god and equipping people in the DC metro area as together we impact our world for Jesus Christ.” All members of the church are guided on a three-part journey:

1. Christ in you. This stage is an emphasis upon bringing a person to a place of experiencing Jesus intimately. Salvation and a vibrant devotional life is nurtured. The primary place this occurs is in our Sunday morning services. Jesus is presented as Savior, Healer, Deliverer and Lord.
2. Christ in your relationships. This stage calls us into deeper, more meaningful relationship with others. The biblical premise is that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. The primary place for this to take place is in our small groups that we call “Life Groups”. The transitional nature of the DC metro area promotes a shallow root system where people tend to avoid deep commitments. Life Groups promote healthy interconnectedness.
3. Christ in your influence. This is a disciple-making goal. It is a result of progressing from Christ in you, to Christ in your relationships, to now bringing a trained witness influencing others toward the same journey. It is our desire that no one remain at either of the first two levels but that there be momentum to create leaders well able to fill the vital positions in our church and in our society. It is an intentional, step-by-step journey. The goal is to facilitate godly leaders who will in turn disciple others who will become active servant leaders in their church, community, and world.

Curriculum Content

Those participating in the Leadership Summit will represent a cross section of people who live in the DC metro area and are members of Capital Life Church.

The schedule and topics for the Summit will be as follows:

FRIDAY

9:30 am	Arrive
10:00- 10:30 am	Worship
10:30-11:30 am	Session 1 Leadership
11:30-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30-1:30 pm	Session 2 Story Teaching
1:30-1:45 pm	Break
1:45-4:45 pm	Session 3 Story Time/Crisis Teaching 5:00-7:00 pm Dinner

SATURDAY

9:30 am	Arrive
10:00-10:30 am	Worship
10:30-11:30 pm	Session 4 The Dark Side of Leadership 11:30-12:30 pm Lunch
12:30- 3:15 pm	Session 5 Stories

3:15-3:30 pm	Break
3:30-4:30 pm	Session 6 Self-Care
5:00-7:00 pm	Dinner

The Leadership Summit will serve as a prototype to ascertain if such a teaching and interaction can be beneficial to pass on to other leadership groups as a ministry of Capital Life Church. The focus will be on the following sections: Leadership, Story, Crisis, Dark- side of Leadership and Self-Care. Sessions will be held in-between teaching for personal stories to be shared. There will be opportunities to ask questions, reflect upon the teachings and share stories. A pre-test and post-test will be administered.

This curriculum is targeted to leaders, recognizing the unique challenges faced by those who have come to serve in the D.C. metro area. Such individuals often come to the Nation's Capital on purpose, not by chance and seek an end that transcends mere personal advancement. Many feel a sense of divine calling but may lack clarity as to how to attach to God's larger plan amidst the constant demands of their career. Leadership will be presented as a process. It will be spoken of in terms of being developmental whereby one stage builds upon the next. The idea of finishing well will be presented as the end goal. The dark side of leadership will be presented so as to recognize and avoid the danger of falling at the apex of one's career. A session on Self-Care will encourage health and longevity amidst long workdays and isolation that so often accompanies the lives of highly driven individuals. We will also consider such issues as genuine humility and living a life of character/integrity. The Redemptive Leadership model will be considered as a means to view leadership in a healthy, God centered context.

Summit Sessions

LEADERSHIP (Session One)

The first session will focus on defining leadership. Various definitions will be considered. A biblical perspective that promotes Jesus as the ultimate leadership model will be presented. The goal of leadership will be to lead someone else to fulfill his or her God-given purpose. Getting to this noble end is a transformational process that begins within the leader.

STORY (Session Two)

Storytelling will be studied from ancient times to modern day. A biblical foundation for story, God's meta-narrative of the Gospel and stories of biblical heroes of the faith will be shared. Each participant will be asked to share his or her own life story in terms of "Highs", "Lows" and the "God narrative" with some sharing their stories before the entire group. This session will hopefully conclude with those present considering themselves as intentional stories written by God. Key will be viewing one's smaller narrative in light of God's larger narrative.

CRISIS (Session Three)

Crisis will be defined and recognized as being present in the lives of all leaders. The key is to find God's redemptive purpose in crisis. Reframing crisis from that which anchors to that which parlays holy influence will be considered. Personal responsibility to not run from crisis but redeem it will be shared using biblical stories and modern biographical

citations. God will be presented as actively at work bringing each Summit participant to a place of wholeness so that wholeness can be brought into the lives of others.

OVERCOMING THE DARK-SIDE (Session Four)

The responsibilities, pitfalls, and dysfunctions that leaders experience often result in broken hearts, families, and careers. The Dark-side of leadership will be defined and biographies from scripture will be shared to bring a better understanding of how leaders so often fall at the very apex of their careers. Submitting to God, dealing with unmet needs, and redeeming the Dark-side allows one to live, not in the shadows but in the light.

SELF-CARE (Session Five)

Success as a leader is often accompanied by stress, exhaustion, and a lack of joy. Signs of burnout, stress and strain will be outlined. The biblical concept of a Sabbath will be presented as a necessity. Biographies from scripture including King David, Elijah, Martha and Mary will be reviewed. Rest and revitalization tied to God's love will be shared. The goal will be to have longevity of influence and to finish life having run the race in such a way as to win.

Assumptions

My assumption would be that leaders invited to the Leadership Summit would already have an understanding of a personal God who is active in their lives. I assume this because they are active members of my church and have sat under biblical teachings, developed healthy, godly relationships with fellow believers and are encouraged to

actively develop a strong devotional life. My hope would be that their understanding of God would be deepened through this Summit, particularly when it comes to the concept of God's narrative amidst the crisis moments of one's life and how those can be parlayed into influence. I would also assume that the teachings on the dark side of leadership and self-care would be new to many as they were to me when I learned them in the doctoral classes. These teachings will address the sustainability of healthy leadership. Re-framing may also be a new concept to some, allowing for healing from past wounds that otherwise might fester and result in future damage.

The uniqueness of this Summit will be that it is geared toward leaders and takes into account the unique challenges and expectations that are placed upon them. It encourages a level of vulnerability in a secure setting whereby crisis points are discussed with a reference that is biblical and redemptive. It will advance an end objective that promotes "being" over "doing". The Summit will give practical helps for health and longevity in leadership. The constant reference point will be others over self. It will help each person find answers as to unlocking the meaning of one's life and the redemptive potential of one's most difficult crisis moments. The Summit will help participants find redemptive influence in the very areas the enemy has tried to defeat him or her, so they can ultimately bring healing to others.

Summary

This chapter presented the hypothesis that a curriculum for leaders from the Washington, DC area, based on the Redemptive Model, can train leaders to view their life stories within the context of God's larger narrative with particular emphasis on crisis

being redeemed for greater influence. It has outlined the format and methodology that will be used. It has shared the uniqueness of the curriculum and outlined what will be presented in order to equip participants to share what they have learned with others. In the next chapter, the results of the Leadership Summit will be documented so as to ascertain whether or not the hypothesis is valid resulting in the equipping of leaders to see and share their life stories from a perspective of God's meta-narrative and a redemptive view of crisis.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

In chapter four the project was proposed with the key question, “will a curriculum for leaders from the Washington, DC area, based on the Redemptive Model, train leaders to view their life stories within the context of God’s larger narrative with particular emphasis on being redeemed for greater influence.” Participants were selected for a Leadership Summit who were members of Capital Life Church and who represented professions indicative of the Washington D.C. metro area. The three miles surrounding the church was considered as to demographics that are unique to the D.C. beltway. The general content of the Leadership Summit was introduced. The results of the project will now be presented.

Project Results

The Leadership Summit was held on Friday and Saturday, July 18-19, 2014. Fifteen people participated. Each was informed prior to the Summit as to what the project would entail, why he or she was chosen, and that involvement was not mandatory. Confidentiality was prioritized along with instruction as to what would happen to information that they would submit and share including the results of the testing. Potential concerns that would arise were addressed pertaining to the vulnerability of sharing.

Those participating were all from the DC – Metro area and were all current members of Capital life Church. Some work full-time for the church and in such

capacities serve those who live and work in the area. The majority serve as volunteers with the church but work in jobs representing the varied careers that constitute the area surrounding the nation's capital. The jobs of the participants are as follows: Program Analyst with the Federal Aviation Administration, Attorney, Financial Analyst with the Department of Defense, Registered Nurse, Foster Care and Adoption Worker, Social Worker/Court Appointed Special Advocate Program, Co-Lead Pastor, Business Analyst at Freddie Mac, Worship Pastor, Political Consultant, Administrative Pastor, Current Full-time Mom and Former Health Policy Advocate and a Contract Specialist at Specialist at Department of Human Services.

Leadership

The first session focused on leadership. Since each person served in a leadership role in the church, there was a natural affinity to the subject matter. Serving in the nation's capital and surrounding area attaches the church to national leaders who are members. Leaders from the government, media, military and beyond are part of the Capital Life Church family and stand to benefit from what Summit participants learn. The beginning of this session focused on leading oneself well before seeking to lead others. Living above reproach whereby one's life is without handles that others can pull down and ruin a reputation was discussed. This was an unexpected introduction for some whose expectation was to leap into the subject of impacting others. The foundation was set as we considered leadership in terms of "being" that results in "doing".

Clarity as to the distinction between godly leadership and leadership based on more secular definitions focused participants on moving beyond self-centered

interpretations to leadership focused on others. A heart to serve, meeting the needs of others with excellence and seeking to love first in order to bring change all set forth a standard of godly leadership. Stories from the scriptures helped such truths come alive. Jesus was held up as the ultimate example of one who modeled the servant leader as he washed his disciple's feet just prior to his crucifixion. He was preparing his followers for the task ahead as they were chosen to launch the early church.

The lofty titles, job descriptions and associations that accompany such in the DC area can cause people to place their confidence in their competency alone. Session One clarified the insufficiency of mere competency to produce sustainability as a leader and produce eternal results. Leadership as a transformational process was a point that visibly impacted those present. Participants began to view themselves as still learning and growing when it comes to leading. The biblical stories of Moses and Joseph were used to clarify that competency alone didn't bring them to the place of becoming the men of God who wielded grace and spiritual influence. The eyes of the participants were opened to the "stripping" process in the lives of Moses and Joseph whereby humility once unobserved was present. What once was about self-became about others. Crisis did not triumph over the meta-narrative of God but rather parlayed crisis into the fulfillment of God's purposes in a generation. Comments pertaining to the leadership session from those who participated included:

- This was the first time I've learned about redemptive leadership"
- "I have a renewed sense of confidence in the leadership team that I am a part of. "

- “The illustration of Moses/Joseph’s lives in highs/lows and life events (with themes) really stood out to me- breaking down life this way helped me see God’s narrative in all our lives.”
- “This was a wonderful reminder of many aspects of leadership that pulled things into a great framework...this format was superior methodology for developing an understanding of the overall theory propounded and biblical basis for that theory. Further, it created an environment to apply the theory in an interpersonal context.”

Story

It is inherent to each person to desire to share one’s story. It validates our existence.

Sharing one’s unique story is both vulnerable and freeing. It connects us to one another, uniting us as we become known to each other beyond the surface. As individuals shared their life stories in highs and lows the vulnerability often produced very emotional moments. Tears flowed as individuals spoke of people and stories from their past. It was at times, unexpected by the one sharing. The connection to God’s meta-narrative helped meaning to emerge from stories previously dealt with alone or in a shallow, surface fashion. The meta-narrative connected each hearer with something larger than a recitation of the past and shed light on the meaning of one’s existence. It also had a future reference as people contemplated what such a testimony, now redeemed could mean in the retelling to others. Comments included:

- “I gained a greater understanding of being able to see the bigger picture in people’s lives and seeing God’s plans unfold for them, whether people in the Bible or participants in the exercise”.
- “This experience validated that sharing our stories builds trust at a deeper level than just working together”.
- “I think one of the most powerful statements is, ‘God is not using you in spite of your story, he is using you because of it’”.
- “Intentional looks into the life stories of “Co-workers” reap an almost immediate return. These sessions have helped reinforce the importance of sharing stories, how they are a catalyst for deeper understanding of others and of oneself”.

Crisis

A common thread through the lives of all people is that life contains difficulties and wounds are inevitable. Such have the potential to either destroy or empower one’s life and influence. The Bible is filled with stories of leaders who felt the bight of something that could have resulted in them becoming bruised and bitter. How one interprets such moments is critical in an effort to define and direct. The key is to find God’s redemptive purpose in crisis. “Reframing” whereby one sees crisis in light of God’s redemptive purpose is an area that was new to many of the participants. Dr. Harvey Power’s statement, “We go from seeing events of our stories as limiting factors to seeing these events as why God uses us” impacted those present and was fodder for discussion. Participants learned to be responsible for how they interpret and share their stories. They were also challenged to be “story catchers”. Comments on this session include:

- “I appreciate it being important to recognize the redemption in our own stories and then using what we’ve learned to help others to see the redemption in their stories. I enjoyed breaking down our stories into segments and recognizing how moments of crisis are turning points. I think this is a particularly important aspect of redeeming a story as the crises can otherwise just be moments of regret or shame.”
- “The concept of ‘reframing your story’ was new to me, and a great tool in adjusting perspective, both of our pasts and of our futures.”
- “I need to think about myself as a little girl again.”

Overcoming the Dark Side

In session four we discussed our lives as leaders amidst experiencing ever present responsibilities, long hours, increased stress, unrealistic expectations, etc. Honestly appraising our hearts, our dysfunctions and undealt with hurts was considered. We looked at self-deception and selfish motives that can result in jeopardizing our futures. King Saul was a biblical character we considered as to the dark side of leadership. The desire to achieve has many potential downfalls. Submitting to God and redeeming one’s dark side is imperative if one is to have longevity and success as a godly leader. Comments for Session Four include:

- “The dark side of leadership is rarely something we want to explore in ourselves. We have seen it spread across the headlines about other leaders. We never want that to be us so we tend to hide our dark side.”

- “I definitely struggled. I am one who loves to love and be loved. That is a great strength in ministry. However, the dark side of that strength came for me in a season of selfishness as I began to look for approval in the wrong places. Pleasing people became a priority over pleasing God.”

Self-Care

Living a life that prioritizes performance can be exhausting. It is not unusual to see a leader succumb to anxiety and emotional breakdowns at the peak of one’s career.

Believing one must achieve to be loved can actually push away the very ones we care about the most. Participants learned to identify the signs of burnout as we defined stress, considered warning signs of strain and delved into the biblical concept of the Sabbath.

Elijah in the Old Testament and Martha in the New Testament gave us scriptural biographies to consider and from which to draw insights. Reasonable limits and intentional plans were discussed. Comments from Session Five include:

- “I gained a greater awareness of the warning signs of burnout...I was reminded that everyone has pains and vulnerabilities, and that when they share them, others
- are better able to open up to them. Those who share are better able to overcome those flaws and vulnerabilities.”
- “As a leader, relationship is key. Not only to have fruitful and healthy relationships but to foster an environment where healthy and fruitful relationships flourish.”

Test Results

The tests used were designed to measure the growth of understanding in the participants regarding their personal life stories being written by God with a particular emphasis on crisis and its potential to be parlayed into godly influence. The desired result was to show a growth pattern in understanding between the time the Leadership Summit began (pre-test) to when the Summit ended (post-test). The results of the t-tests found in the survey statements #1, 2, 8, 9 and 10 were statistically significant (strong growth in understanding). All other statements showed a growth pattern except for statement #3, which I will discuss further. Dr. Bryan Auday, Ph.D., professor in the department of Psychology at Gordon College, evaluated the tests. All results are found in full detail in the Appendix in the form of tables and graphs.

The test indicated a clear favoritism in terms of participants selecting “strongly agree” and “agree” more than any other response in both the pre-test and post-test, showing the group leaned toward one end of the scale. In other words, they already agreed with the subject matter even if they would later agree to it more strongly. This may be due to the participants all being church leaders who likely heard me intersperse thoughts (along the line of the Leadership Summit teachings) in my sermons over the years before the Leadership Summit was held. Results in the future, as I guide leaders outside the church in the materials, will likely show a greater variance and growth pattern. Still, clear growth occurred which was very satisfying.

Question #3 was the only one in which there was not a growth pattern. The statement is “There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from truly being

whole.” The majority agreed with the statement while a few strongly disagreed. I think the question can be considered by some to be factual as to their life stories while others believe agreement with such would be counter to faith. In other words, some believe “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” means I strongly disagree that anything can inhibit someone in who is in Christ. Statement #8 had the most variance in response in the pre-test. The statement is, “I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to story.” Clearly, the concept of reframing pertaining to one’s personal story was an arena that had not been understood or considered by several participants prior to the Summit. The post-tests showed strong growth in understanding pertaining to reframing.

Surprises

Although I expected the telling of individual stories to be meaningful, there was a depth of emotion that swept over participants that surprised me. The recalling of a departed loved one who left a lasting legacy, or the sharing of a loss literally stopped the proceedings as the group gathered to support the story teller. Words of affirmation flowed as a sense of greater disclosure, unity and mutual affirmation prevailed. What could have been a rote exercise, resulted in what participants believed to be moments when the sharing of one’s story intersected with the intervention by the Holy Spirit. One leader attending the Summit was overwhelmed by tears as he shared from his highs, lows and God-narrative. Participants recognized that a process of walking into godly maturity was taking place.

This experience laid a foundation for an intentional building of a culture for Capital Life Church that would reflect caring for one another in a deeper dimension. A further surprise was the lack of in-depth analysis on the part of most of the participants as to their life stories. Basic facts had long been recited but a meaningful narrative that brought meaning from low points and captured a God-narrative was a freshly valued goal. I was amazed by how little we really know each other until such a deep vulnerability and disclosure takes place, even though we have worked side-by-side over years.

Changes

As a pastor, I am constantly sharing the ideas that have most shaped my life in my messages. I have been profoundly moved by the power of defining one's story in light of God's larger narrative with an emphasis on parlaying crisis toward influence. The community at Capital Life Church are therefore exposed to such material before I can bring them into a Leadership Summit. Such would be less likely were I to share in another church or venue. This may have led to skewed results in the pre/post-tests as results showed the dominant response to both pre-test and post-test questions was "strongly agree" or "agree". Half of the test questions still yielded a significant growth pattern, but I believe the overall results were muted due to exposure to the ideas presented even though the Leadership Summit brought deeper levels of training.

Looking back, it would have made sense to have an immediate follow-up to the Summit that included personality/gifting tests. Such tests could have fine-tuned how current leaders serving in the church could serve more effectively. Providing greater

feedback to the Summit would also have been beneficial. A pre-test/post-test format was useful but did not give the level of input that would allow for detailed assessment of where participants would have desired to go deeper or needed better understanding. Having five sessions in 1 1/2 days allowed time for only half of the group to share their stories. Perhaps break-out sessions would have made possible a deeper level of disclosure and participation. I would add Esther to the biblical biographies next time since she fully meets the criteria of a life that faced crisis and was redeemed through her obedience to actively embrace God's meta-narrative.

Future Benefits

From the Leadership Summit eventually emerged a Leadership Development Track at Capital Life Church. The track begins with materials shared at the Leadership Summit. It is an excellent foundation from which to share our church story, mission statement, foundational beliefs, etc. It also sets the stage to train our leaders in topics such as conflict resolution, organizational structure, communication, management, etc. Such structural training, when experienced by all leaders who serve Capital Life Church is a great strength to shared vision, values and goals. As I have met with national leaders, I have been able to use these materials to draw out the God narrative and encourage those whose decisions impact our nation and world.

Personal Reflection

As I was walking a U.S. Air Force officer through the highs and lows of his life, he commented that the military tasked him to consider twenty highs and lows of life but never encouraged the God-narrative. The unique aspect of considering the God-narrative

is that it speaks to guidance beyond oneself and helps one view vocation as a calling. What could become a mere recitation of life becomes instead the telling of a testimony. It speaks to God's authorship of a personal maturing process and lends meaning to even the most difficult of things one might have endured. Story in this format, goes beyond mere telling of memories to a recognition of a partnership between God and the person. The results can touch the lives of others. One begins to come alive with purpose as we view ourselves as the "catchers" and "interpreters" of stories that might otherwise be lost or considered meaningless in the telling. Reframing and the telling of one's self-story can restructure narrative from being self-centered or found in victimization to being attached to higher purpose with wider impact. We are no longer tossed by the winds of circumstances but rather active navigators who recognize our lives as being tied to divine authorship. Weaknesses and hardships are no longer hidden but found to be an anointed testimony when seen in light of Jesus' redemptive work on the cross. God shows the greater meaning and purpose in our lives when we find our stories attached to his meta-narrative.

The results of a group's knowledge of story, crisis, etc. could have been skewed before the pre/post tests could be taken since I peppered my sermons over the years of the modular with what I was learning. This happened before I knew what subject I would select for my thesis. The excitement comes when I consider the magnitude of what these teachings can do in the future at Capital Life Church and the lives that can be transformed. Since the Leadership Summit, people have been adding the word "redemptive" to the word, "leadership". The terms "reframe", and "self-care" are heard but more importantly are implemented into discussions and culture of the church. The

concept of leadership being transformational allows for grace and humility in the understanding that even the most seasoned leaders are constantly learning and growing. This gives me the confidence that this can be trained and have a great impact within and beyond the local church format.

APPENDIX A

LEADERSHIP SUMMIT QUESTIONNAIRE

Bill Shuler

July 18-19, 2014

Leadership Summit

Cordon-Conwell Seminary

Questionnaire

Please circle one: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree or Strongly Disagree

(Please feel free to explain your answer[s] on the back of this page)

God is writing an intentional story with my life.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------

I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.

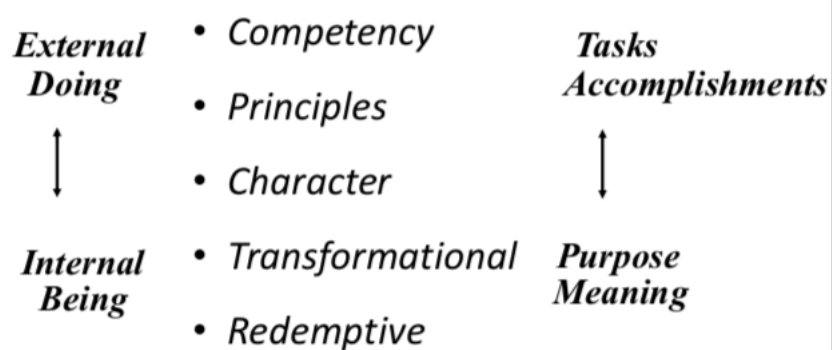
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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APPENDIX B
REDEMPTIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL

Key Concepts of Redemptive Model



APPENDIX C
T-TEST AND PAIR SAMPLE TEST

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	God is writing an intentional story with my life.	1.40	15	.507	.131
	God is writing an intentional story with my life.	1.07	15	.258	.067
Pair 2	There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.	1.67	15	.488	.126
	There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.	1.13	15	.352	.091
Pair 3	There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.	2.87	15	1.356	.350
	There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.	3.00	15	1.604	.414
Pair 4	Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.	1.20	15	.414	.107

	Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.	1.07	15	.258	.067
Pair 5	I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	1.33	15	.617	.159
	I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	1.20	15	.414	.107

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 1	God is writing an intentional story with my life. - God is writing an intentional story with my life.	.333	.488	2.646	14	.019
Pair 2	There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story. - There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.	.533	.516	4.000	14	.001
Pair 3	There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole. - There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.	-.133	1.246	-.414	14	.685
Pair 4	Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose. - Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.	.133	.352	1.468	14	.164

Pair 5	I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others. - I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	.133	.640	.807	14	.433
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Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.	1.27	15	.458	.118
	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.	1.07	15	.258	.067

Pair 2	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	1.60	15	.507	.131
	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	1.33	15	.617	.159
Pair 3	I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.	2.87	15	1.125	.291
	I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.	1.27	15	.458	.118
Pair 4	The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.	1.33	15	.488	.126
	The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.	1.07	15	.258	.067
Pair 5	Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.	1.53	15	.640	.165

Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.	1.13	15	.352	.091
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Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation			
Pair 1	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character. - There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.	.200	.561	1.382	14	.189
Pair 2	There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others. - There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.	.267	.594	1.740	14	.104
Pair 3	I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story. - I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.	1.600	1.183	5.237	14	.000

Pair 4	The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis. - The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.	.267	.458	2.256	14	.041
Pair 5	Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis. - Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.	.400	.507	3.055	14	.009

Appendix D

Pre-test and Post-Test Results and Charts

Pre-Test Results

Frequency Table

God is writing an intentional story with my life.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	9	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Agree	6	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	5	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Agree	10	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	8	53.3	53.3	60.0
	Neutral	1	6.7	6.7	66.7
	Disagree	2	13.3	13.3	80.0
	Strongly disagree	3	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	12	80.0	80.0	80.0
	Agree	3	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	11	73.3	73.3	73.3
	Agree	3	20.0	20.0	93.3
	Neutral	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	11	73.3	73.3	73.3
	Agree	4	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	6	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Agree	9	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.

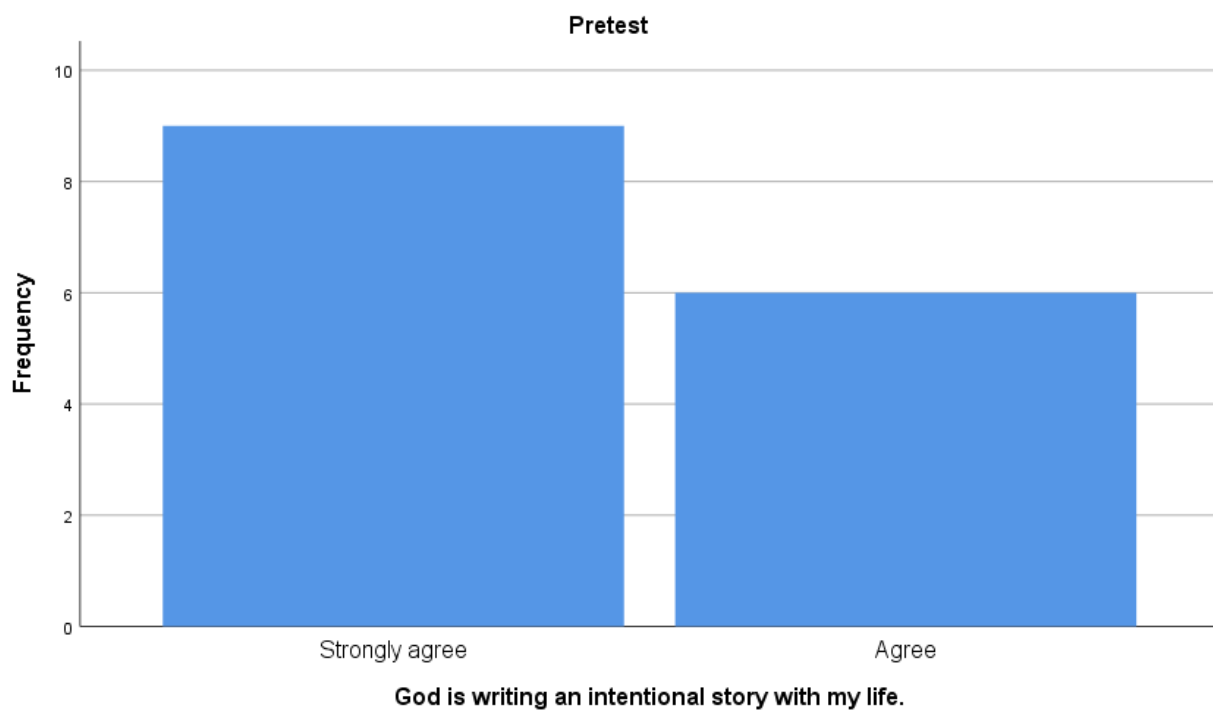
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Agree	6	40.0	40.0	46.7
	Neutral	3	20.0	20.0	66.7
	Disagree	4	26.7	26.7	93.3
	Strongly disagree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

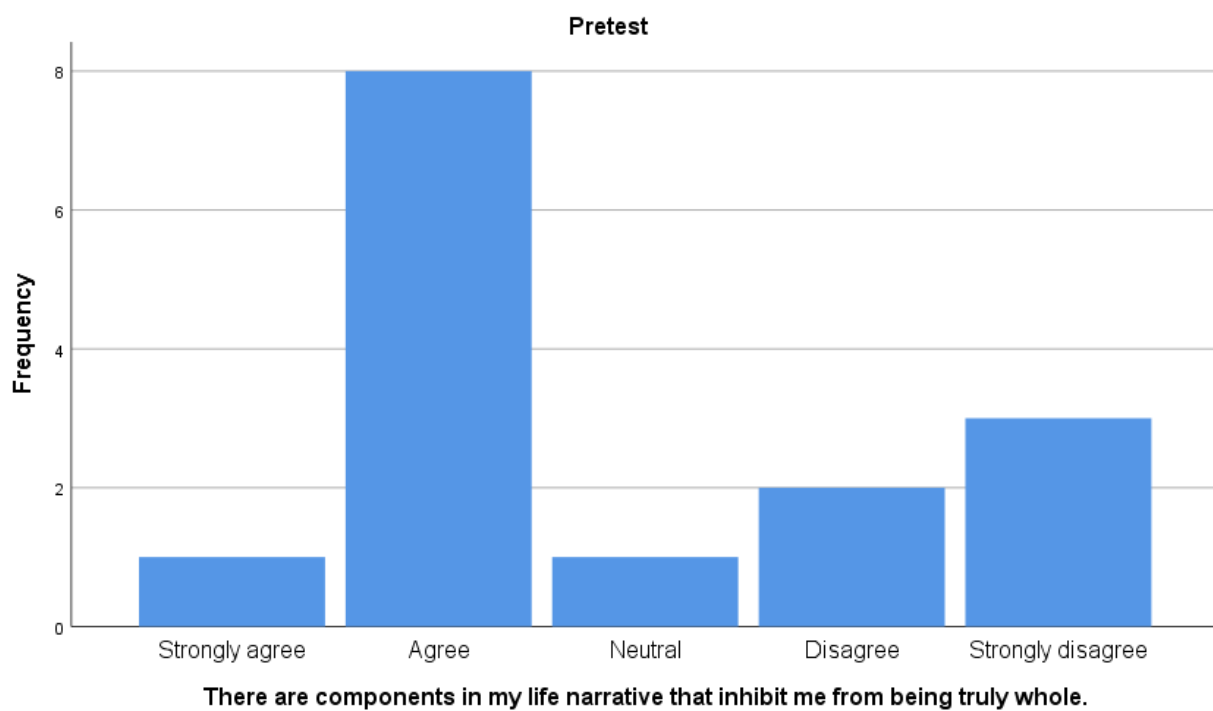
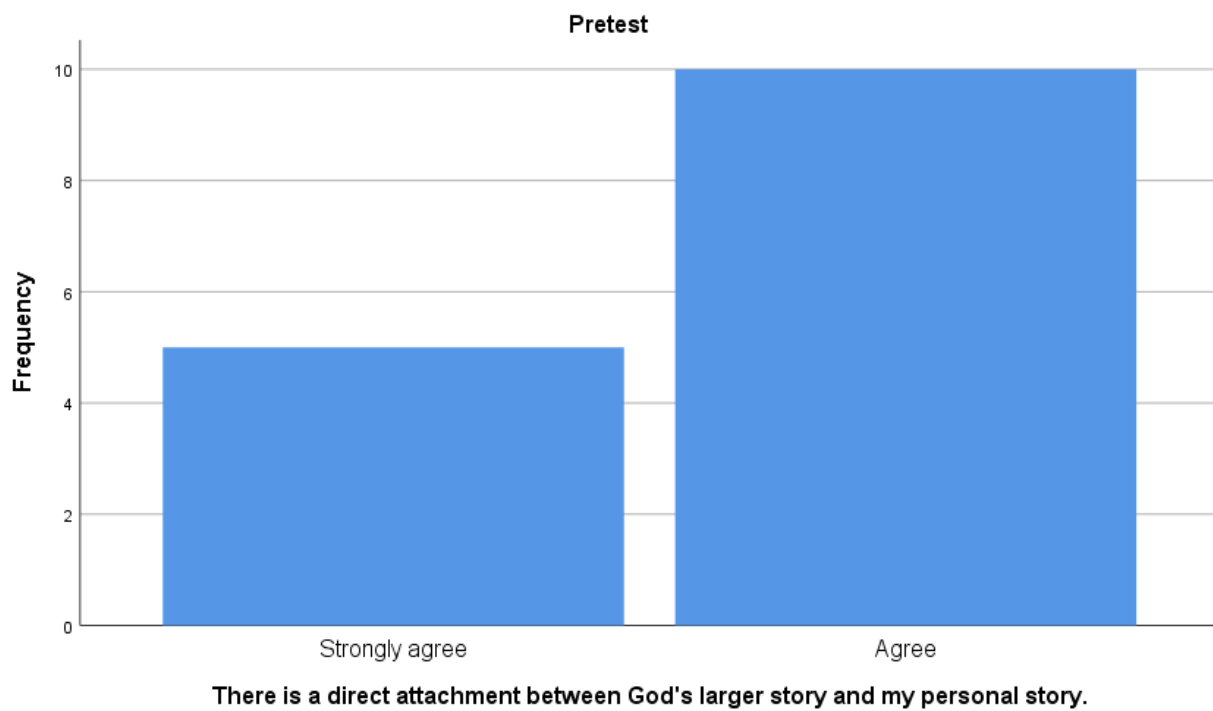
The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.

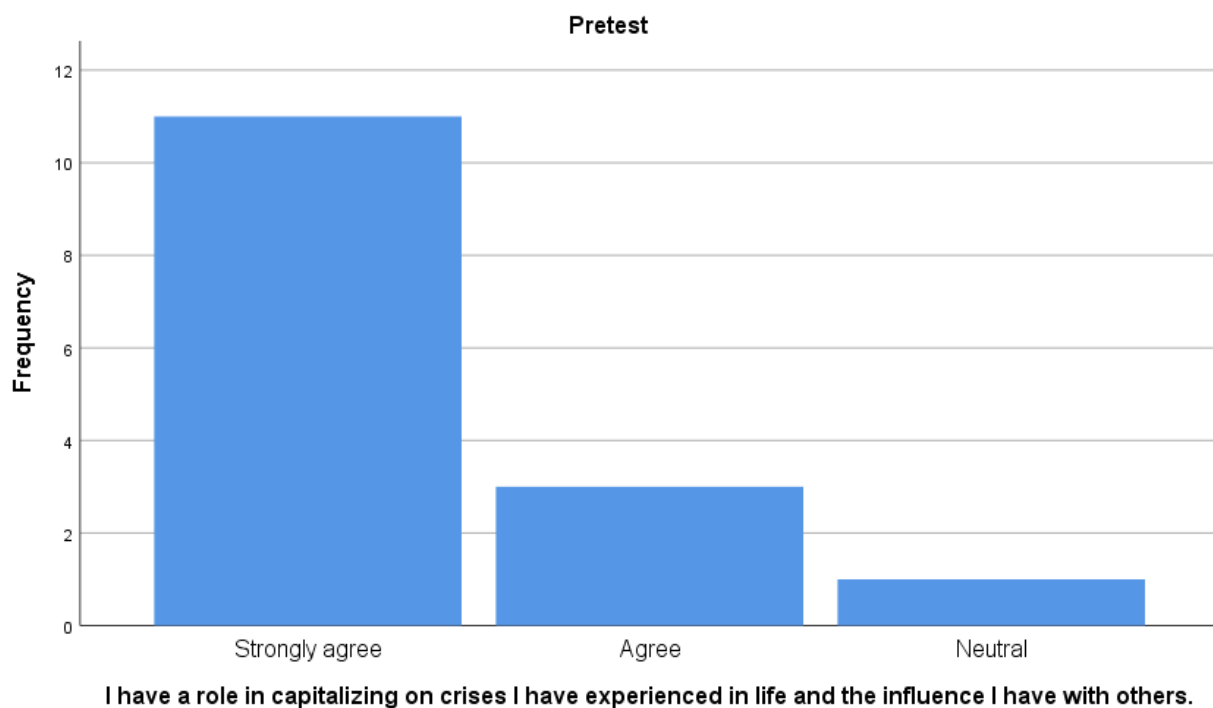
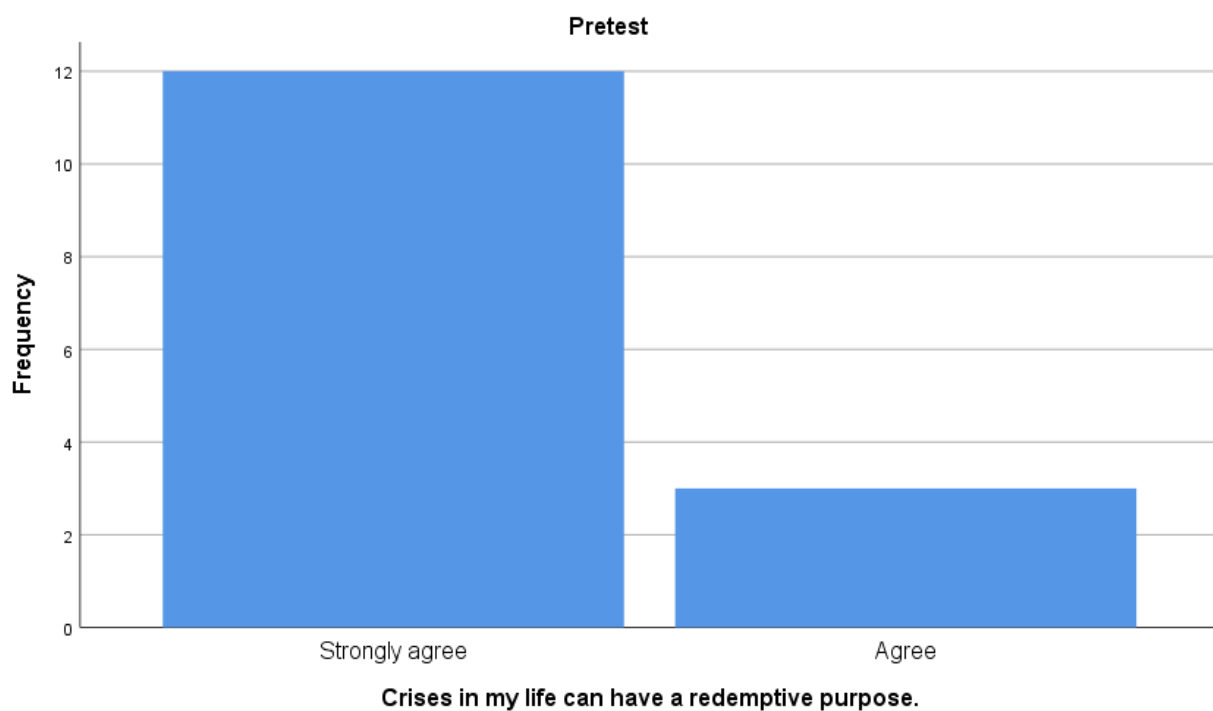
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	10	66.7	66.7	66.7
	Agree	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

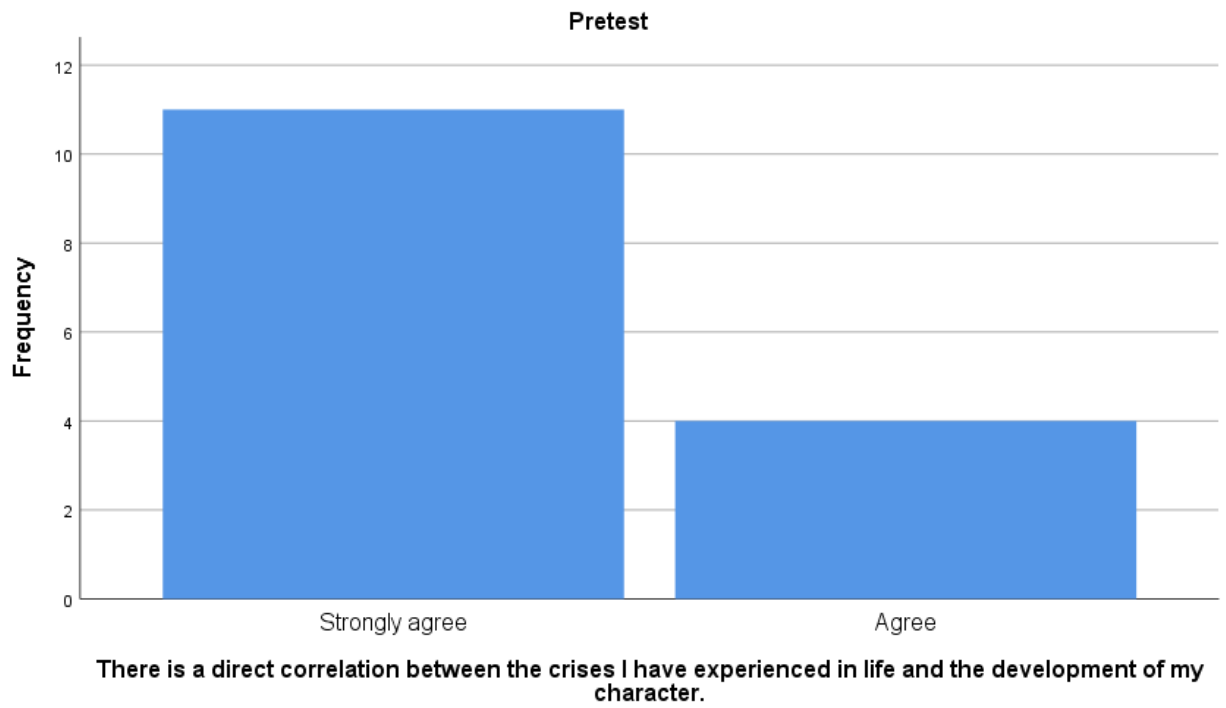
Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.

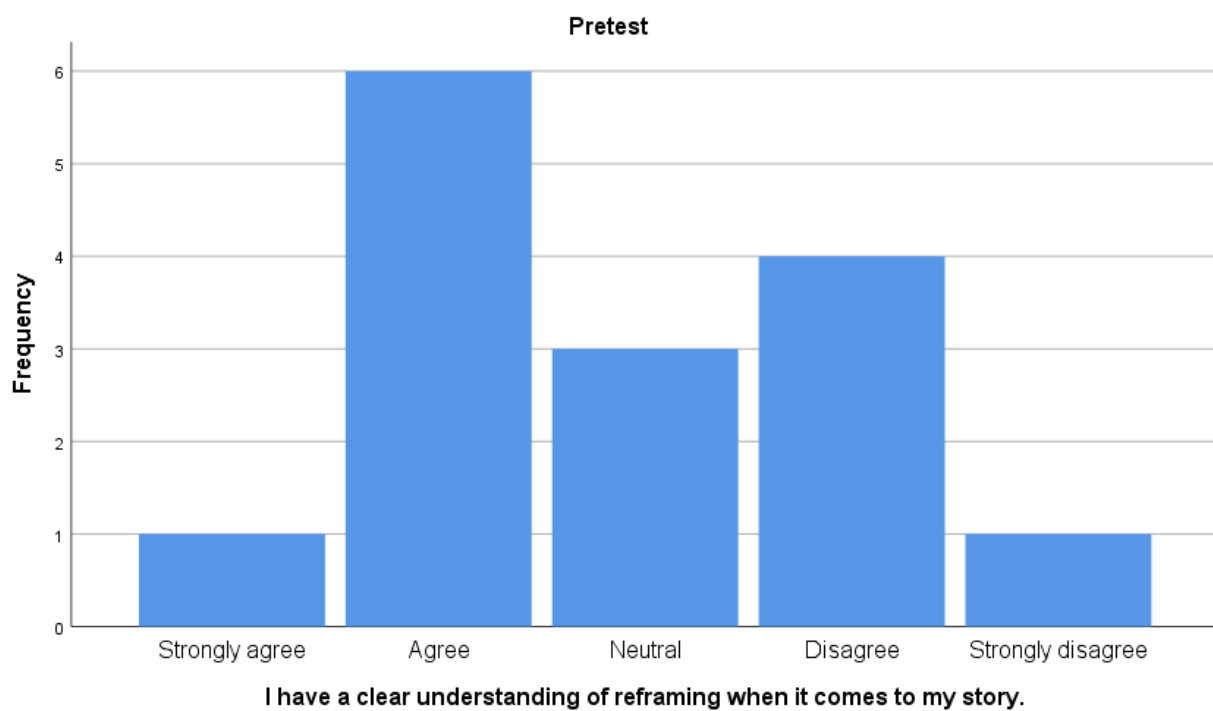
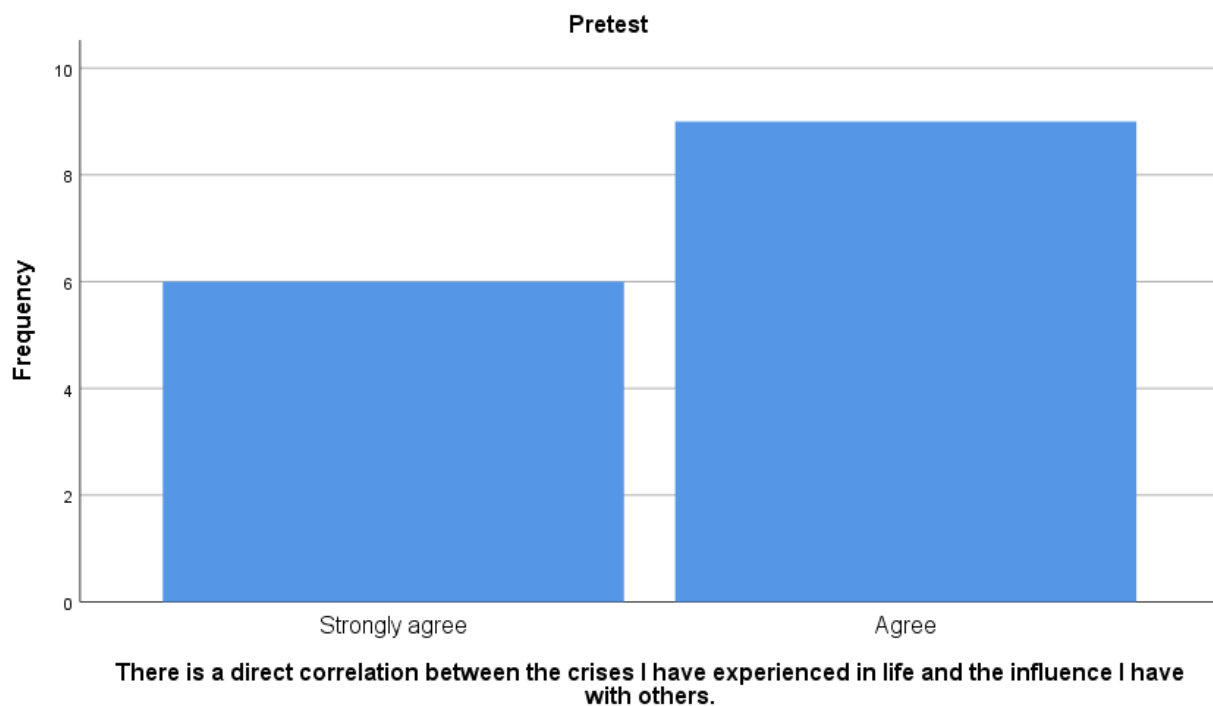
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	8	53.3	53.3	53.3
	Agree	6	40.0	40.0	93.3
	Neutral	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

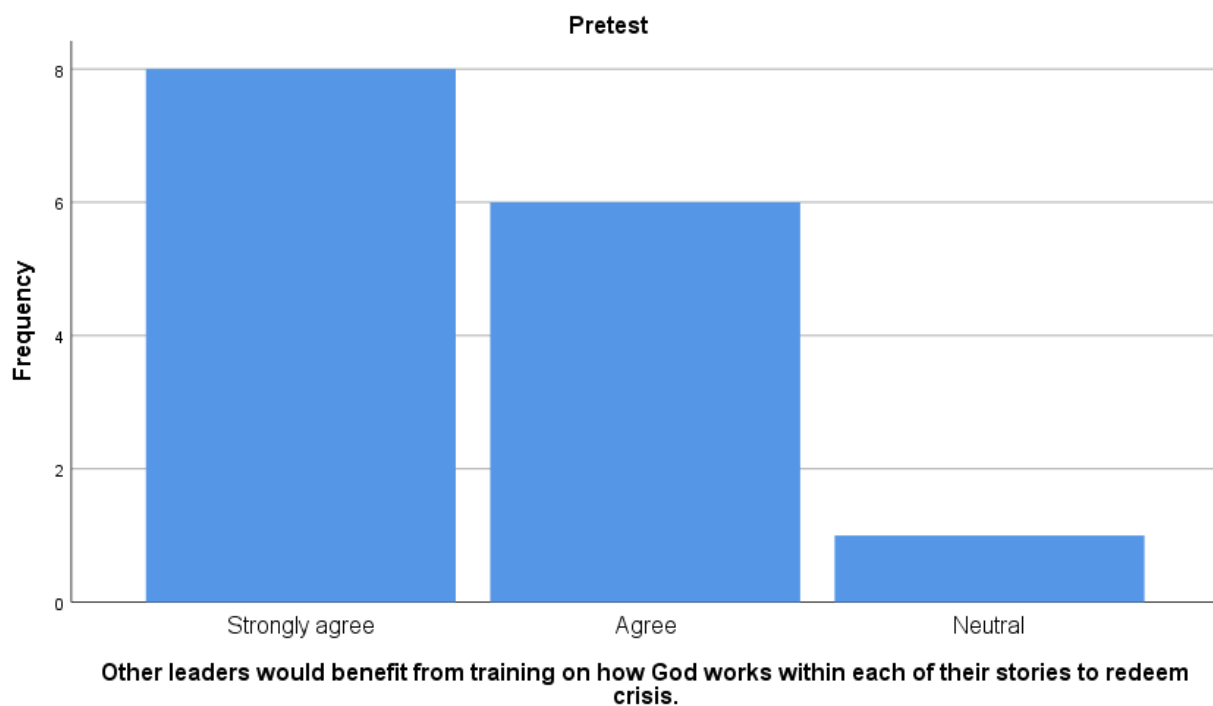
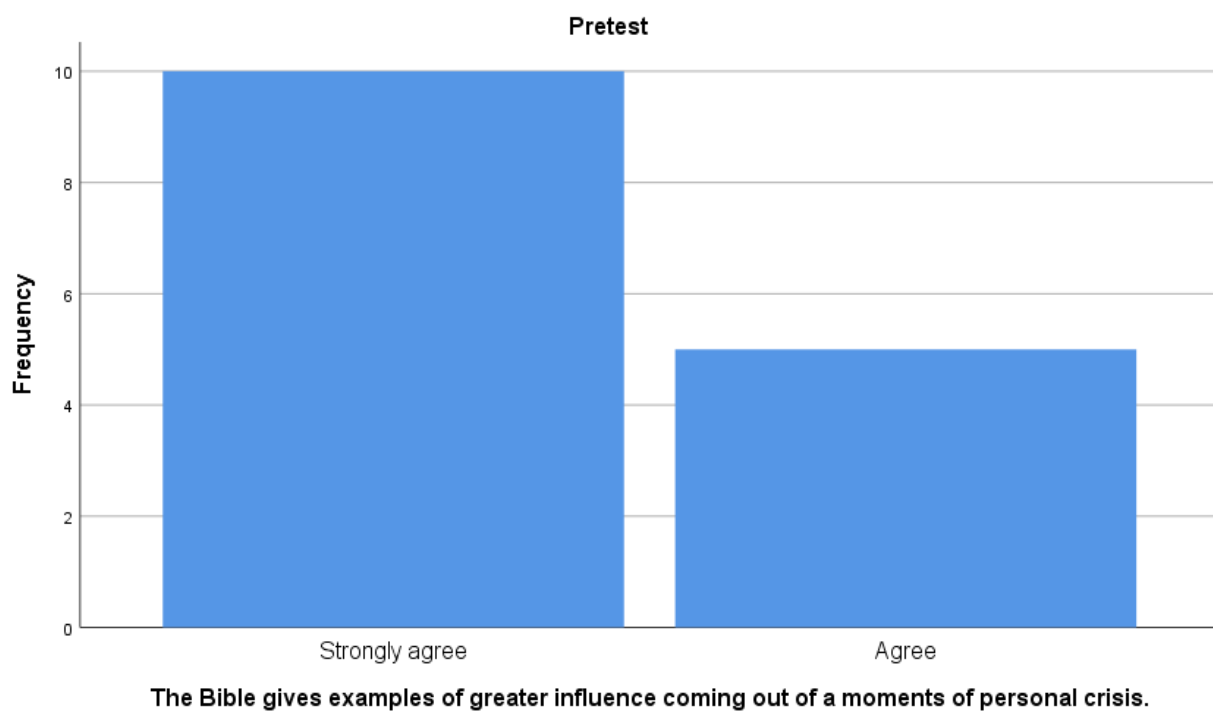
Bar Chart











Posttest Results

Frequency Table

God is writing an intentional story with my life.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	14	93.3	93.3	93.3
	Agree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct attachment between God's larger story and my personal story.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	13	86.7	86.7	86.7
	Agree	2	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There are components in my life narrative that inhibit me from being truly whole.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	3	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Agree	5	33.3	33.3	53.3
	Disagree	3	20.0	20.0	73.3
	Strongly disagree	4	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Crises in my life can have a redemptive purpose.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	14	93.3	93.3	93.3
	Agree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

I have a role in capitalizing on crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	12	80.0	80.0	80.0
	Agree	3	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the development of my character.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	14	93.3	93.3	93.3
	Agree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

There is a direct correlation between the crises I have experienced in life and the influence I have with others.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	11	73.3	73.3	73.3
	Agree	3	20.0	20.0	93.3
	Neutral	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

I have a clear understanding of reframing when it comes to my story.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	11	73.3	73.3	73.3
	Agree	4	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The Bible gives examples of greater influence coming out of a moment of personal crisis.

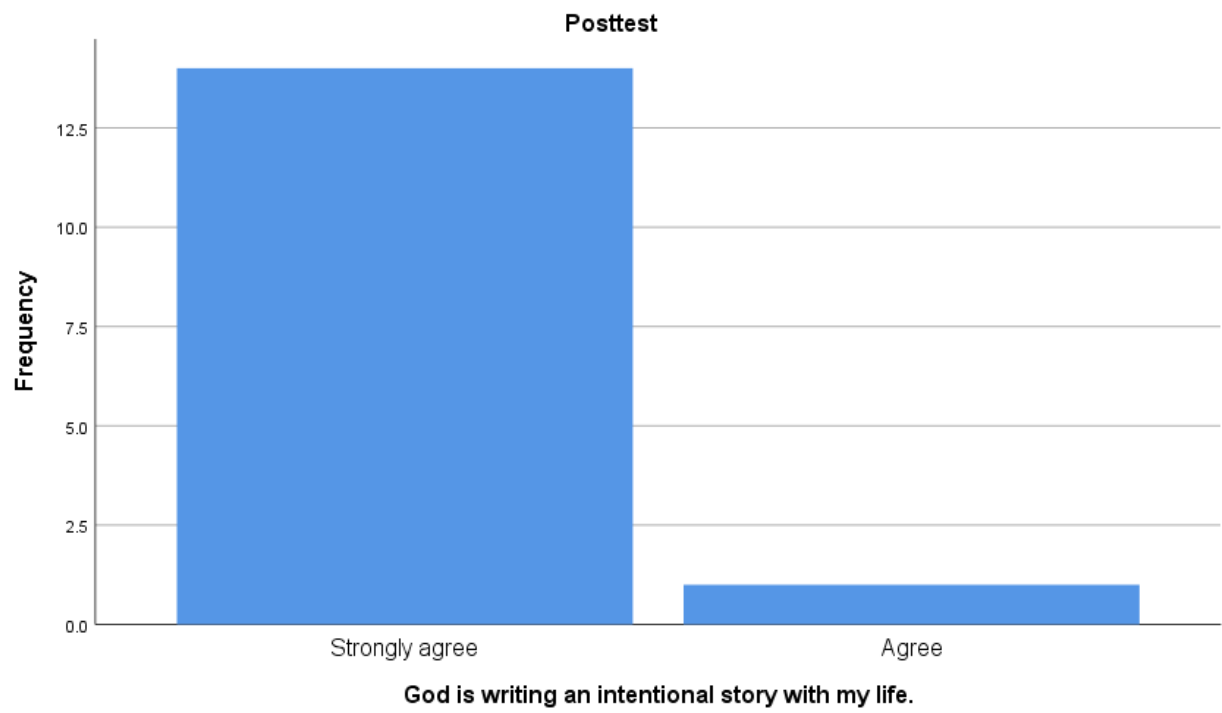
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	14	93.3	93.3	93.3
	Agree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0

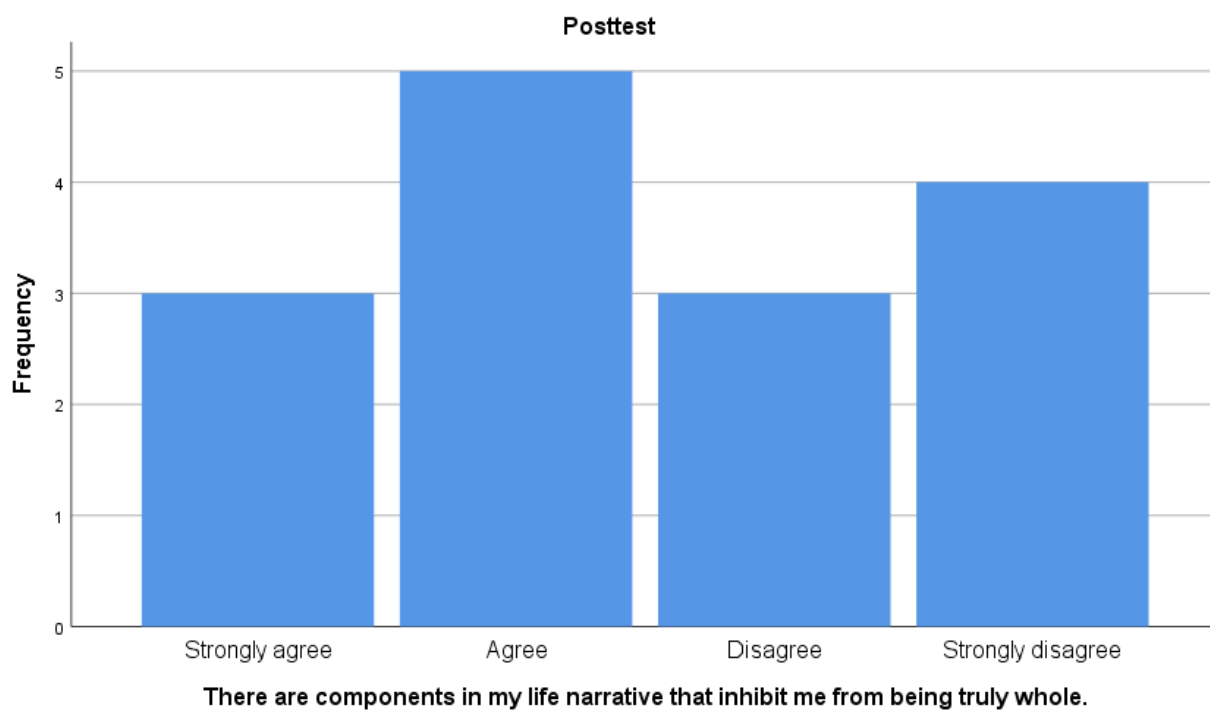
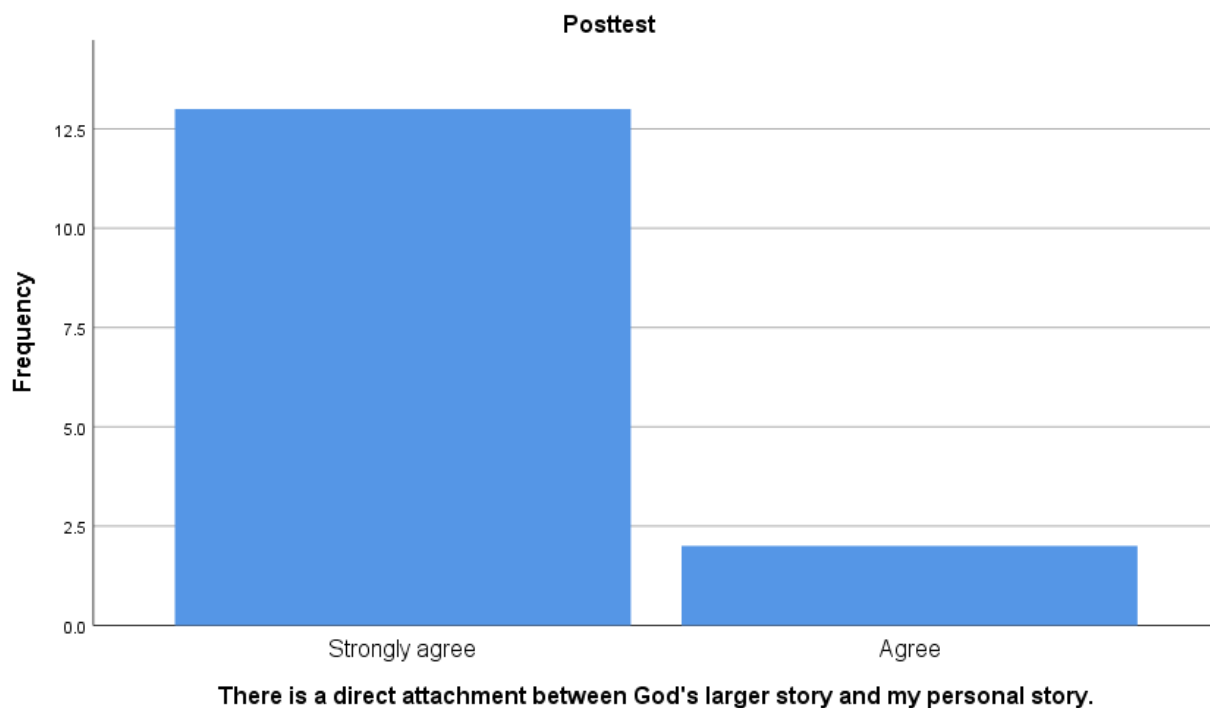
Total	15	100.0	100.0	
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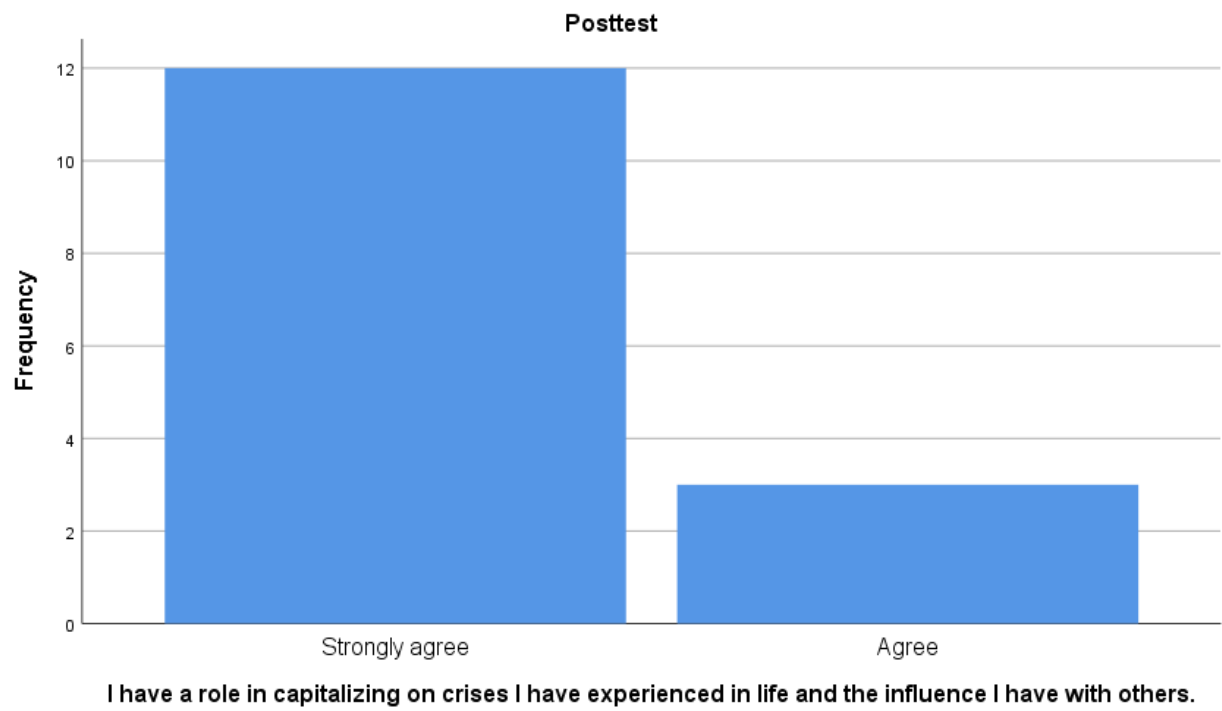
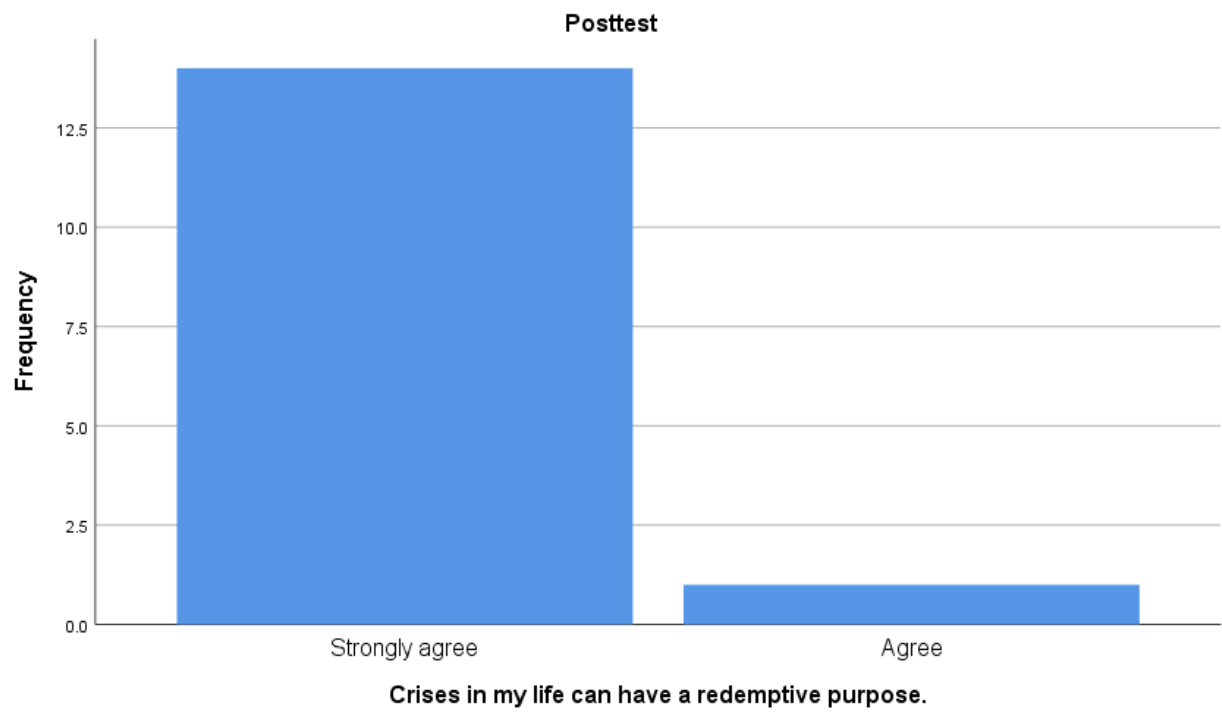
Other leaders would benefit from training on how God works within each of their stories to redeem crisis.

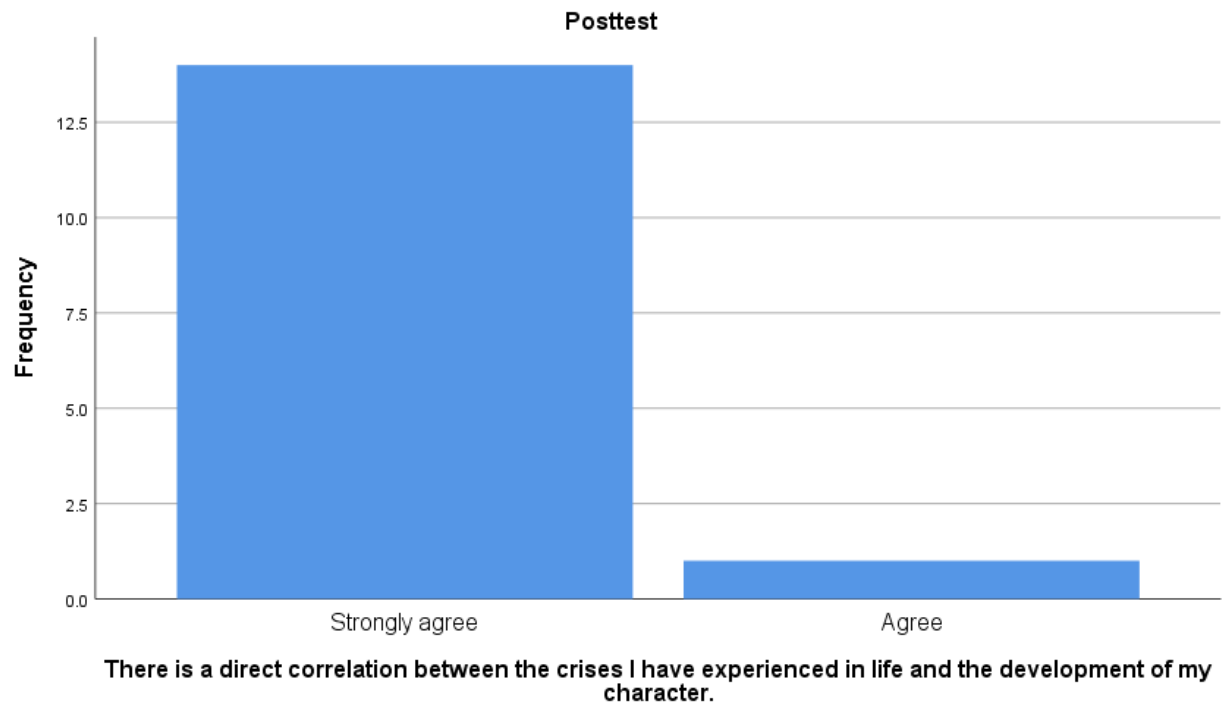
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	13	86.7	86.7	86.7
	Agree	2	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

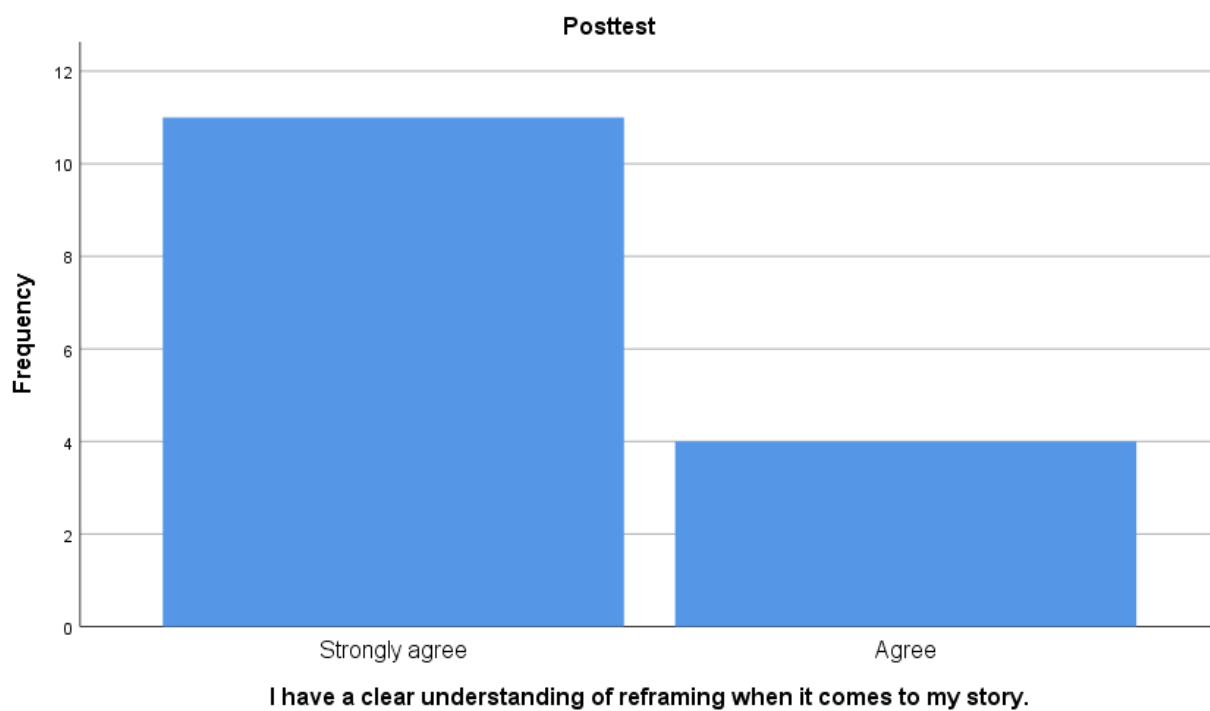
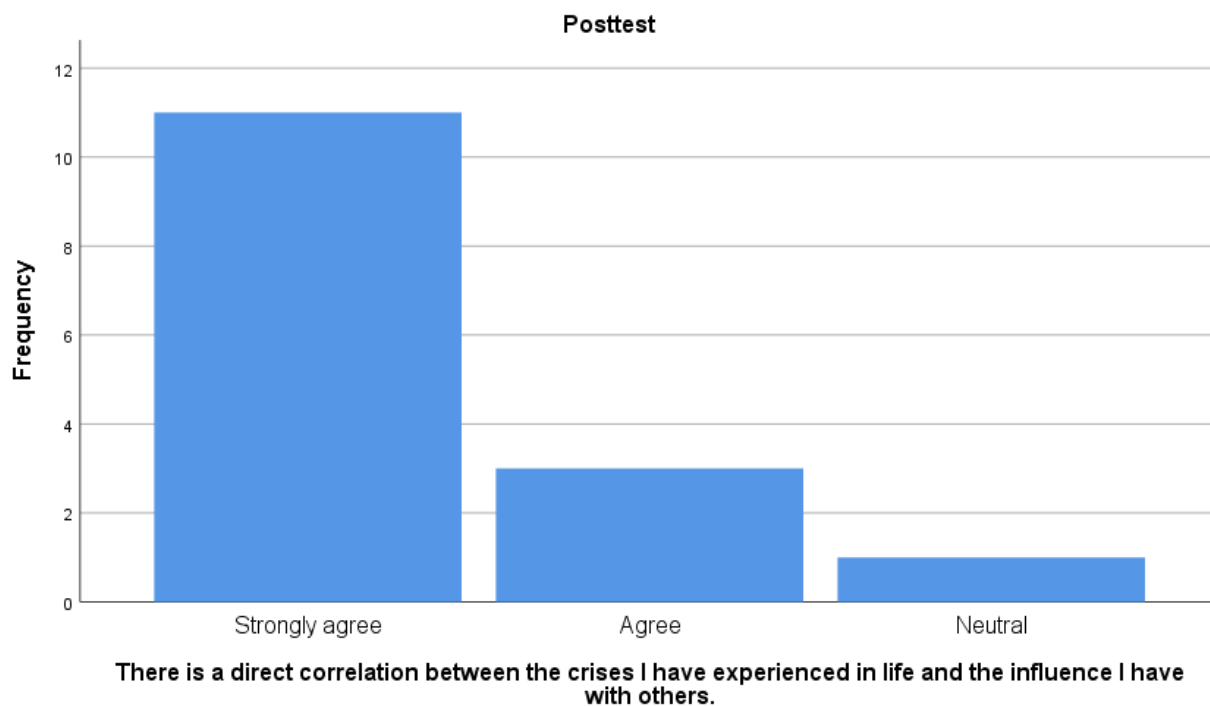
Bar Chart

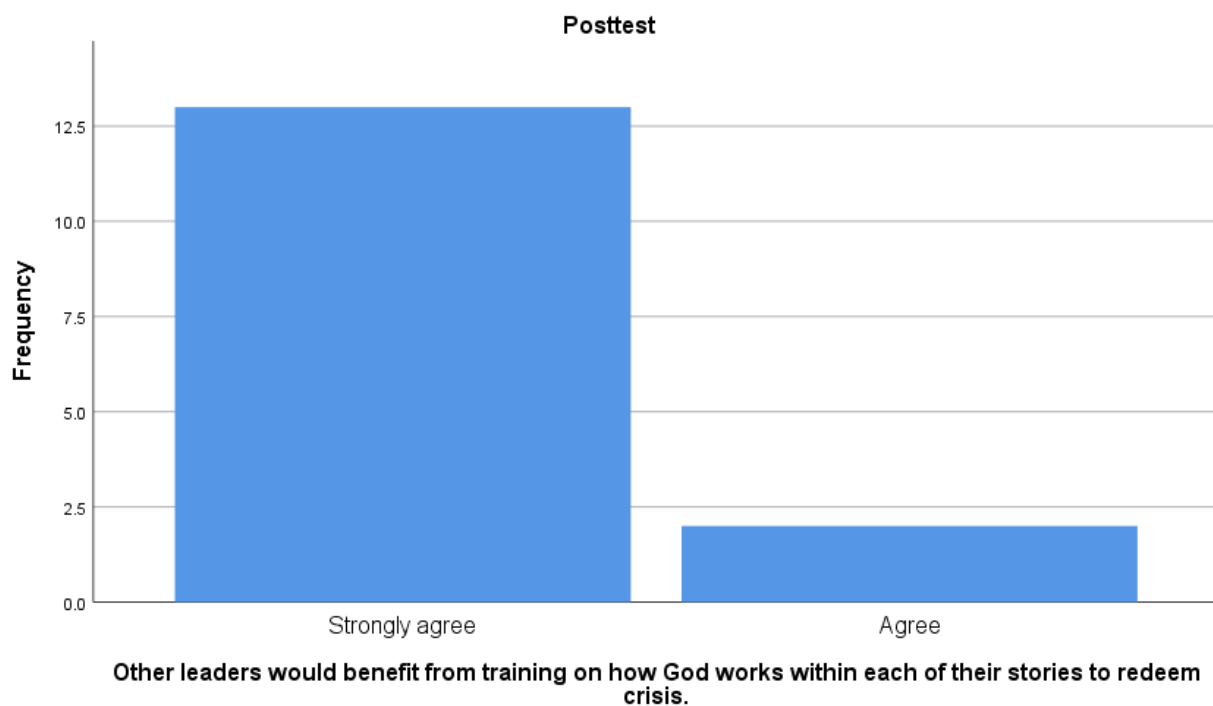
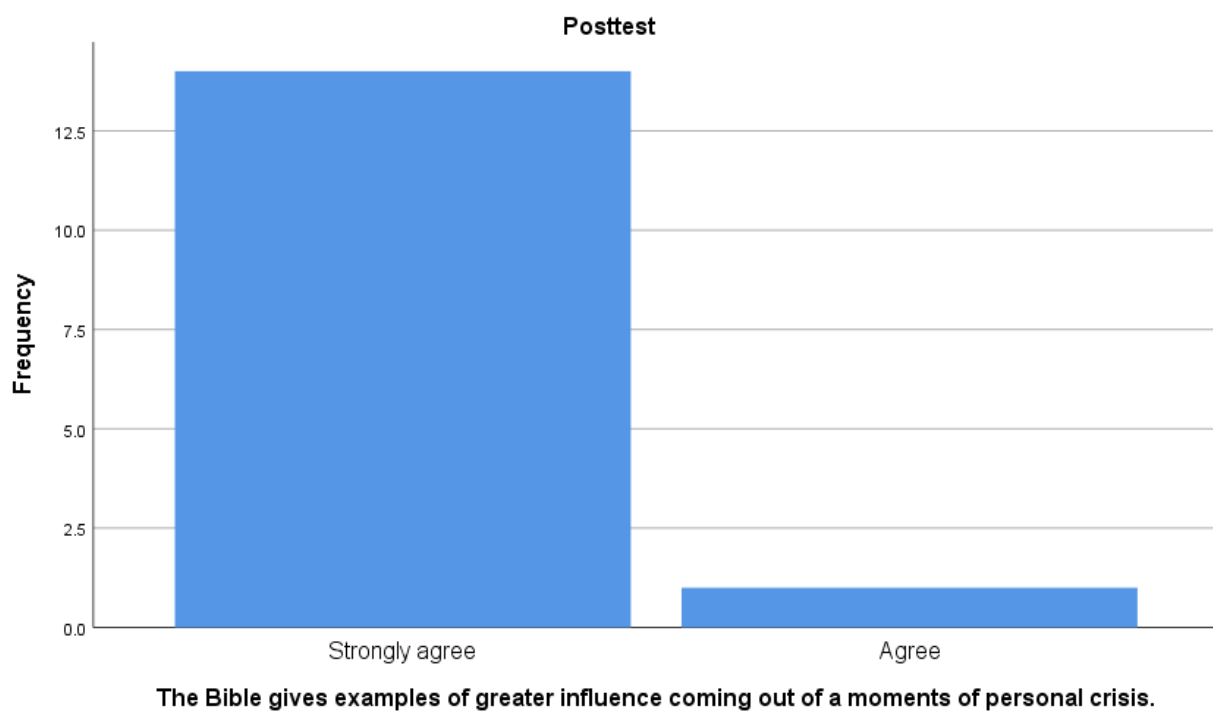












APPENDIX E
MOSES HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE MATURING PROCESS



APPENDIX F

JOSEPH HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE MATURING PROCESS



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